

Computer Entertainer

INCLUDES

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THE VIDEO GAME UPDATE

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TOP 10 SELLERS Game Systems

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TOP 10 SELLERS

Computer Entertainment

1. Summer Games (EPYX/C64)
2. Flight Simulator II (SubLogic/AP)
3. HESGames (HES/C64)
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(Top 10's are compiled from a panel of retail outlets chain stores and distributors)

COMING NEXT MONTH

REVIEWS

including
Robots of Down for C64
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Zaxxon for ADAM
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Imagic 1-2-3 for Atari
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Archon for Apple
Skyfox for Apple
...And, as always
lots of other surprises

Atari Makes Official Statement

In the first official press release since Jack Tramiel took over Atari, some light has been shed on Fourth Quarter and 1985 plans.

According to James Copland, Vice President of Marketing, "The new Atari will position itself as a full line manufacturer of quality products in the video game, family computer, and small business computer categories. We will aggressively attack these world markets with pre-planned, precise sales, marketing and advertising strategies that will enable us to achieve our targeted goals."

"In the video game category, Atari will entrench itself and aggressively go after a larger share of the video game and related software market on a worldwide basis. Concurrently, Atari plans to manufacture and supply the Atari 800XL family computer, satisfying the overwhelming and increased demand for that product with aggressive, competitive pricing through the end of 1984."

Says Jack Tramiel on plans for 1985, "I will present to the world, the new Atari Corporation; a corporation that through its new corporate image, and expanded product offerings, will give to the retail markets of the world 8, 16, and 32 bit micro computers, all at affordable RBP's." (note: "RBP" is a Tramiel-ism and stands for Rock Bottom Prices.)

New Product to Unveil at Winter C.E.S.

According to James Copland, new computers will be shown for the first time at the Winter C.E.S. (January in Las Vegas) which tells us that they will, undoubtedly, license from or take over another company which already has computers in development or finished. There simply is not enough time for Atari to develop and manufacture even a prototype within the time frame. We know Atari talked with Amiga regarding their computer (see related story in this issue) and we understand they are now talking with Mindset Corp., a small computer company which has a 16-bit computer designed around the advanced-design Intel Corp 80186 microprocessor and is compatible with IBM computers. The Mindset retails in the vicinity of \$2,400 with two disk drives and 256K. The other possibility would have Atari licensing one of the many Japanese computer manufacturers currently not available in the U.S.

Not Going to be Easy

Regardless of which company(s) Atari hooks up with, the going will be extremely rough in the small business end of things. First, Tramiel is known for announcing many more products than he brings to market (sound familiar??), partially as a means of "testing the water." Also, the specialty computer dealers are NOT going to be anxious to work with Tramiel after what he did to them when at Commodore. Many dealers were very angry when Commodore began selling their computers through discount stores, slashing prices on the computer line without protecting the dealers from the lower pricing.

Our Analysis of What Was Said

After reading the press release several times and talking with inside sources, it is evident that there are some areas of concern which we should address. First, you should carefully note the wording of Atari's support of the 800XL. Although there is no

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We're Not Afraid of No Ghosts!

Activision has just announced an exclusive licensing agreement with Columbia Pictures, giving Activision the videogame rights to the summer's hottest movie, *Ghostbusters*. Gamers everywhere will be delighted to learn that the *Ghostbusters* game for the Commodore 64 computer will be available in diskette format in time for Christmas. The designer is none other than David Crane, who has won numerous awards for his other Activision games: *Pitfall*, *Pitfall II* and *Decathlon*.

Crazy about the Movie

We were told that David was "crazy about the movie," and is hard at work on the game. We can expect it will be a good one, because David is a talented designer with particular skills in graphic animation. We asked about the possibility of adaptations of *Ghostbusters* for other systems and were told that Activision is exploring that possibility. We'll let you know just as soon any decisions are announced. AND...watch for our review of the Commodore 64 *Ghostbusters* game. (We can't wait to start *Ghostbustin*!!)

CRITICALLY SPEAKING..

ATARI COMPUTERS

JULIUS ERVING & LARRY BIRD GO ONE-ON-ONE



ELECTRONIC ARTS™

(★★★★/★★★★½) has now reached the Atari format and, once again, it brings to life one of the most realistic and enjoyable sports simulations available. Dr. J (Julius Erving) and Larry Bird's characteristics, strengths and weaknesses have been programmed in-

to this one-on-one basketball battle. The player may choose to play against a computer-controlled Dr J or The Bird, or two players can play at once, each controlling one of the basketball greats. Games can be played to a set time or set score with four skill levels available. Virtually every nuance of a real-life basketball battle has been thought of—including fatigue factors, hot streaks, strong slam-dunks (which will shatter the backboard), travelling, blocks, rebounds, etc. Instant replays of really great plays are provided.

Input from the Players

Design sessions when this game was originally conceptualized were arranged for the two famous players. The results of those sessions add a terrific dimension to the game as the programmer has built-in many of their playing characteristics. The graphics are, as in the other versions, outstanding and basketball fans will enjoy hours and hours of fun. We brought in some non-basketball (and non-sport) gamers and discovered the interest level was as keen as their sport fan counterparts. It's lively and fun and there's a great deal of satisfaction when you win against the best! Once again Electronic Arts has come up with a winner! (one player; two-player simultaneous; joystick; disk) (also available for Apple, C64) Recommended (MSR \$40.00)

TONK IN THE LAND OF BUDDY-BOTS



MINDSCAPE INC

(★★★★½/★★★★½) is designed as a learning game for children 4-8 years old. This is the first in a planned line of TinkTonk games developed by Angelsoft and it's a cute one. You can play either the Adventure or just play a Game without going on an adventure. The Adventure option includes the Game option within it. In the Adventure

you must help find Buddy-Bot's parts and put him back together again. You can do that by either moving through Buddy-Bot Land picking up parts or by sending Tonk into one of the caves and playing one of the Games. You win a Buddy-Bot part for each correct answer in the game. The adventure features four difficulty levels with the upper levels including dangers such as Gork's Soldiers, Black Holes, and Sky Holes. Within the instruction book, there is a map of Buddy-Bot Land to help the child navigate through it without becoming frustrated.

Six Games to Choose From

The games which you can play either individually or within the adventure are designed to teach the child patterns, shapes, and concentration. Patterns and shapes are addressed in *Different/Alike*, *Match the Shadow*, and *Buddy-Bot Puzzle*. Concentration and memory are tested in *Minibot Shuffle* and *Remember Me*. Just for fun, your child can build their own Minibot in the *Minibot Factory*. Make the Minibot just as silly as you want!

Very Musical

We were impressed with this first TinkTonk adventure as it comprised the elements of pretty graphics, cute animation, and engaging music. The music changes based on where you are in the adventure land. All the colorful and animated characters will keep the child's attention, as well as the raft ride and cable car ride they can go on! The joystick is extremely easy to use, with simple movement, or the child can choose to use the computer keyboard if that is more comfortable. Clear, on-screen instructions help to make this a rewarding experience for any youngster. (solo play; joystick or keyboard) (Also available for C64) Recommended (MSR \$39.95)

MONTEZUMA'S REVENGE (★★★★½/★★★★½) is identical



PARKER BROTHERS

to the version for the Atari 5200, which is reviewed in the *Video Game Update* section of this issue. (Solo Play; Joystick; Dual-sided Disk has Commodore 64 version on other side; also available for Atari 2600, 5200, and ColecoVision; coming soon in dual-sided disk for Apple and IBM PC.) Recommended. (MSR approx \$40.00)

FROGGER II: THREEDEEP! (★★★★½/★★★★½) from Parker Brothers is essentially the same as the version for the Commodore 64 computer, which is reviewed elsewhere in this issue. (Solo Play; 2-Player Alternating; Joystick; Disk.) (Also available for Commodore 64; for Atari 2600, Atari 5200, and ColecoVision)

Recommended. (MSR approx. \$40.00)

CRITICALLY SPEAKING..

IBM PCjr-COMPATIBLE

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT (★★★/★★★★) has nothing



to do with Dostoyevsky's famous novel by the same name, but instead it lets the user assume the role of a judge in criminal proceedings. This game was developed from a data base of actual judges' decisions in real criminal court cases. You are confronted with nearly limitless numbers of cases, ranging from shoplifting to murder and even treason. For each case there is a main menu, including choices to examine the offender's criminal record, check the details of the crime, or look at the offender's pre-sentence report. Each of these topics in the main menu leads you to a sub-menu with more selections, such as learning more about the offender or about the victim's injuries. Once you have compiled the facts of the case, a fourth option in the main menu lets you review the known facts. The fifth option is taken when you are ready to render your verdict. You may put the offender in prison, in jail, on probation, or—under special circumstances—impose the death penalty. If you choose prison, jail, or probation, you are asked to enter the number of years, weeks, and days. Following your decision, a scale is shown that weighs your sentence against an actual judge's decision. The closer you are to that judge's sentence, the better your rating. You are graded from ten gavels (best) down to one gavel (worst). Also at the end of each case you will be given a judicial "IQ" rating which is averaged with preceding IQ's from other cases.

Not for Everyone

If you like a lot of pretty pictures in your games, this one is for you. There are only three graphic screens (the judge at the bench, a clipboard, and the scale), and they are shown on the package. However, the few graphic elements present are good. This is a game for those who want to test their powers of reasoning and learn something about the judicial process. Something that parents should keep in mind, however, is that this game contains examples of real crimes, such as murder and rape, that you might not want your younger kids being exposed to. In fact, Imagic has the good sense to put a "parental discretion" warning on the package, explaining why it might not be suitable for everyone. But if you have always wanted to have the power to mete out justice putting criminals behind bars, this game is for you. If that power doesn't appeal to you, then this case is closed. (Solo Play; Keyboard; Disk for IBM PC/PCjr.) (Coming soon for Apple.) Recommended. (MSR \$34.95)

New Epson Printer Interface

If you own either an Apple //c or the Macintosh, Dresselha Computer Products has developed interfaces to allow the use of various Epson printers. The cPRINT Interface, for Epson RX and FX printers, will work with your //c and retails for \$59.95. It comes packaged with a serial interface card and a cable with a connector that plugs right in to the //c's printer port. The AYN (All-You-Need) Interface, for the Epson FX-80, comes with FingerPrint (allowing easy access to the various typestyles offered by the printer), cable, and firmware for the Macintosh for a retail price of \$99.95.

EXPLANATION OF RATING SYSTEM:

- ★★★★—EXCELLENT
- ★★★—GOOD First set of stars—Quality of Graphics
- ★★—FAIR Second set of stars—Quality of Play Action
- ★—POOR

N/A—Not Applicable (i.e. Adventure games are not rated for graphics)

Any game for a given system is compared only to other games for the same system. In other words, all Atari 2600-compatibles are judged separately from ColecoVision-compatibles, etc. The same system is used for computer software, except where noted (i.e. many Atari and C64 software is virtually identical)

CRITICALLY SPEAKING..ATARI COMPUTERS

SUMMER GAMES (★★★★ / ★★★★★) is the perfect antidote for the withdrawal symptoms you may be suffering now that TV coverage of the Olympic games is over. (By the way, you might wonder why the word "Olympics" is not used in the title of this game or anywhere in the instruction booklet. The use of the word "Olympics" is strictly regulated, requiring a license granted by the U.S. Olympic Committee.) Whether the restricted word is used or not, there's no doubt that this video game portrays a very specific kind of summer games. The video game begins much like the real Summer Games, with a lone runner who lights the traditional flame with his torch, followed by a flight of white doves of peace over the stadium. This rendition of the opening ceremonies is made all the more poignant by the musical accompaniment, the familiar "Bugler's Dream." (This little scene raised a few goose bumps the first time we booted the disk—a most unusual reaction to a video game!)

Let the Games Begin!

After the flame is lit, up to eight players enter their names and choose the flag of the country they wish to represent. A brief bit of each selected country's national anthem is played, and then it's time for the games to begin. Competitors can participate in any or all of the eight events, or they can choose to practice any single event without scoring records being kept. If the player chooses the complete series of events, the first competition is the pole vault. Players may start at any bar height up to 5 meters, and there is a choice of high, medium or low grip on the pole. Timing is critical in this event, from planting the pole in the vault box to choosing the moment to kick up and over the bar and finally releasing the pole. When the last player is eliminated by failing three times to make a certain height, a brief medal ceremony follows. The gold medal winner is honored by a flag display and the playing of his or her country's national anthem.

Platform diving is next: a series of four dives in which body position and speed of rotation are determined by the positioning of the joystick. The trick is to have the diver's body enter the water vertically and fully extended with a reasonably difficult dive. The judges award scores based on form and degree of difficulty. After the beauty of the diving event, it's time for a little exertion. The opening events, 4 X

100-meter relay and 100-meter dash, can accommodate two players at a time. Each runner's speed in the relay is controlled by the position of the joystick. Achieving the best time requires watching the runner's energy level (an energy bar at the bottom of the screen), and determining the best balance among normal running, sprinting and coasting. The 100-meter dash calls for more stamina than finesse, as the player works the joystick side-to-side up-and-down as quickly as possible to develop maximum speed. Critical timing comes into play once again in the gymnastics event. Here the player can try to match Mary Lou Retton's perfect "10's" in vaulting over a horse. Various combinations of joystick and firing button moves allow the player to move the gymnast on screen into the running approach, the springboard jump, the aerial twist, the push off the horse, the somersaulting dismount, and the perfect landing. Scores are based on execution and degree of difficulty. We found this one of the most challenging events—we never did manage a "10!"

The freestyle relay and 100-meter freestyle events allow for two players in the pool at the same time. Techniques to be learned include the timing of the "power stroke" as the swimmer's arm enters the water and the optimum moment for the kick-turn to change directions in the pool.

The final event, skeet shooting, will be less familiar to most players than the other events. The setting is a semi-circle of eight shooting positions from which the player attempts to shoot at 25 clay pigeons which are released singly and in pairs.

Realism and a Variety of Challenges

We were very enthusiastic about the first version of *SUMMER GAMES* for the Commodore 64, and the adaptation for Atari computers is equally impressive. In fact, after spending two weeks of marathon TV-viewing during the Olympics, this game seems even more enjoyable than our first experience with it in May. The team of Epyx designers who created this *tour de force* are to be commended for its beauty, depth, and timeliness. The graphics are carefully drawn and capture the different venues with an excellent sense of realism. The player's skills are challenged in a wide variety of contests while controlling graceful male and female athletes. This game is guaranteed to bring back the excitement you experienced while watching the Olympics a few weeks ago—it certainly did for us. (Solo Play; up to 8 Players alternating; 2-Player Simultaneous in some events; Joystick; Disk.) (Also available for Apple, Commodore 64, IBM PC/PCjr; coming soon for Coleco-Vision/Adam.)

Recommended. (MSR \$40.00)

PUZZLEPANIC (★★½ / ★★★★★) is a challenge for puzzle fans which was designed by Ken Uston for Epyx. There are 43 separate puzzles arranged in eleven families. The player controls Bennie the Bulb, a little guy who's not all that bright unless the player learns to understand the clues. The puzzles range from fairly easy to devilishly difficult. The player even has to learn the correct way to exit each one to find the hidden meanings of the symbols associated with each puzzle. When all the puzzles have been solved in the right order, and all the symbols have been deciphered, the player gets a chance to solve the big one, the "MetaSequence."

For Puzzle Fans

All of the puzzles involve strategy, and most demand action-game skills as well. The player may be working with visual or sound clues, catching polygons, playing "Simon Says" with the computer, or copying musical phrases. The puzzles are seemingly endless in their variety. Graphics are fairly simple because all emphasis is on the play action. Some may like the constant musical background, but we found it annoying—fortunately it can be turned off. Puzzle fans—you know who you are—will have a great time with this one. (Solo Play; Joystick; Disk.) (Also available for Commodore 64.) Recommended for puzzle fans. (MSR \$35.00)

Tramiel Wants \$\$ From Warner

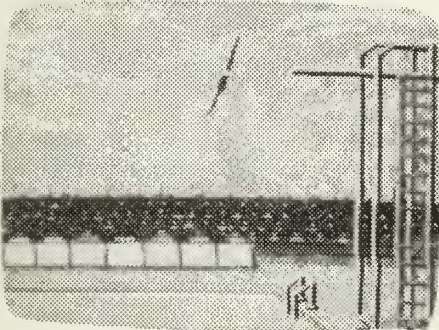
Normally, we don't report on the interworkings of company sales, movement of executives, etc., as it is not of direct interest to our readers. We *DO* report, however, when it may affect the product flow. Hence, we want to pass along some information regarding the Tramiel/Atari deal as it, in a large respect, is affecting the lack of Atari product and announcements on the ultimate fate of product such as the 7800.

We first heard rumbles from within Atari a few weeks ago that Jack Tramiel was not altogether happy with his deal to acquire Atari from Warner Communications (WCI) as he felt not all the cards were put on the table at that time. We waited and wondered what, if anything, he would do. We have now learned that he has gone back to WCI for as much as \$50 million due to the fact that he is having an impossible time collecting debts owed to the old Atari. Debts amounting to, according to one source, as much as \$300 million from retailers, etc., have only been whittled down by about \$30 million that the new Atari has been able to collect. Undoubtedly, WCI indicated that a much larger percentage would be easily collectible.

Creditors Going After Atari, Too

Meanwhile, companies owed money *BY* Atari want their money. This includes everything from independent software developers who worked on game conversions for Atarisoft prior to the sale, to printers, and other companies which provided one sort of service or another to the old Atari. It's unknown what the stance of Tramiel's Atari is regarding these debts (or what may have been negotiated with WCI at the time of the sale).

Needless to say, all this greatly muddies the waters for Tramiel's company to leave the starter's gate. It is very possible that decisions such as the 7800 simply won't be made until, and IF, the money situations can be rectified. From that line of thinking, we cannot blame Tramiel for waiting until all this is cleared up.



CRITICALLY SPEAKING..ATARI COMPUTERS

THE DALLAS QUEST (★★★★/★★★★) comes to the

Datasoft®

Atari computer in a conversion which loses nothing from its C64 counterpart. Welcomed to Southfork Ranch with the

familiar Dallas theme song, your role is a private detective hired by Sue Ellen to uncover a missing map revealing the location of a multimillion dollar South American oil field. An adventure game with a sense of humor, you'll have a tough time just leaving the Southfork Ranch area as there are many obstacles in your path. You can, to a good extent, choose your own level of difficulty as you can make use of optional clues which help from a little to a great deal. Once you manage to get off the ranch, with no help from J.R., you'll head into the wilds of a South American jungle which feature perils of every sort.

Hi-Res Fun

Colorful and realistic screens are evident throughout the game, with artist's renditions of Southfork's residents extremely good. There is a genuine feeling of animation with many of the screens due to the work of the artists who designed the game. It's certainly not necessary to be a Dallas fan—just an adventure fan who enjoys thier game with a sense of humor. With dozens of screens and the ability to save games at any point, this is a great adventure for the Atari computer owner! (also available for C64) Recommended (MSR \$34.95)

JUNO FIRST (★★/★★) from Datamost is an adaptation of the Konami arcade game. Unfortunately, we were not able to find the coin-op in our local arcades, so we cannot make a direct comparison of this home game to its inspiration. Regardless of the accuracy of the translation, however, this home game is yet another version of the outer space shoot-em-up.

In an attempt to create a feeling of depth, the designers have made the playing field black with diagonal lines of white dots receding into the "distance" near the top of the screen. The player's spacecraft can move horizontally and vertically anywhere on this screen. Enemy craft gather and materialize above a horizon of white dots near the top of the screen, moving erratically down the screen and shooting at the player's ship. The enemy ships also try to ram the player's ship, and there are enemy "smart bombs" that follow the player's craft. Enemies that pass the player's ship and disappear off the bottom of the screen may reappear at the top, or they may sneak up on the player's ship from behind. Obviously, the idea is to blast these enemies during the 99-second countdown of the game clock.

Chance Time and Bonus Rounds

During all regular rounds of play, the circular UFO, Carriver, can appear. After the player shoots the UFO, collision with its astronaut, Diskey, sends the player into a six-second "Chance Time" with greatly increased point values for all enemy craft destroyed. The screen turns pale gray during Chance Time, so the enemies are more difficult to see. The third, sixth, eleventh and fourteenth screens are special bonus rounds featuring formations of white, saucer-shaped enemies that are good for more points than the enemies in the standard rounds. (Carriver and Diskey don't appear in the bonus rounds.)

Nothing Original

We weren't impressed by this game, and we can understand why the coin-op version is absent from our local arcades. Sound effects are fairly good, but the graphics are totally uninspiring. Game play is indistinguishable from any of dozens of other shooting contests. We can still appreciate a good shooting game, even though there are an awful lot of them, but we look for something original or unusual in the design of the game to lift it above the crowd. **JUNO FIRST** lacks that spark of creative design that marks the potential best-selling game. (Solo Play; 2-Player Alternating; Joystick; Pause; Disk/Cassette packaged together.) (Also available for Commodore 64.)

Not recommended. (MSR \$29.95)



BEACH-HEAD (★★★1/2/★★★1/2) is an adaptation of a very popular game designed for the Commodore 64 computer, and this version for Atari computers is nearly

ACCESS
Software Incorporated

identical to the original. The game is a classically constructed, multi-stage battle which is fought on sea and land. Play begins with an aerial reconnaissance sequence in which the player must decide whether to approach the enemy through the difficult, secret passage, or to take the direct route and avoid the perils of the hidden passage but face a well-prepared enemy force. Taking a fleet of ten ships through the secret passage one at a time is definitely the more interesting and challenging way to begin the game. However, there is a risk of losing several ships to the mines or the automated torpedoes that criss-cross the path. A direct attack guarantees that the player will face the enemy with all ten ships intact. Unfortunately, the enemy forces will be more aggressive and numerous than they would have been after a sneak attack through the secret passage.

Man the Battle Stations!

In the first stage of actual battle, enemy fighter squadrons attack the player's fleet. The enemy planes loom larger as they approach from the horizon, banking and diving convincingly while the player aims the anti-aircraft guns. Obviously, the player's goal is to eliminate as many enemy planes as possible to keep them from destroying the fleet. If the player can save at least one of his or her ships, the naval battle is next with its heavy artillery fire on both sides. A readout on the bottom of the screen lets the player know if each shot is long or short of an enemy ship. In this sequence, plenty of ships will be sunk—if they're yours, the game is over!



On the Beach

On the Beach

Assuming that the player has at least one surviving ship after the naval battle, two tanks per ship will land and establish the beachhead. This portion of the game scrolls horizontally as each tank is guided across a landscape littered with mines, anti-tank guns, bunkers, and anything else the enemy forces can muster to stop the player's progress. The ultimate goal is the destruction of the island's fortress of Kuhn-Lin. A sequence of ten targets on the fortress must be hit to accomplish this goal. The targets turn white one at a time, and they are only vulnerable when white. It is not possible to hit all ten targets with one or two tanks, by the way. The fortress is defended by a huge cannon that never misses once it has a tank in its sights, so it takes a task force of tanks to do the job.

Already a Hit

BEACH-HEAD has already proven to be a hit in the original version for the Commodore 64. Now Atari computer owners who enjoy battle simulations can find out why this game is so popular. It has been programmed with great care to offer the maximum realism along with a nicely varied sequence of skill-testing situations. The sound effects are first-rate, and the well-drawn graphics offer everything from overhead to first-person perspective in the different screens. The premise of **BEACH-HEAD** is simple, but it offers the chance to plan strategies and cope with changing situations. If warfare simulations appeal to you, this one is a must. (Solo Play; 2-Player Alternating; Joystick; Pause; Disk or Cassette.) (Also available for Commodore 64.)

Recommended. (MSR \$34.95)

Koala Makes Pad for TRS80

Koala has just signed an agreement to produce their popular Touch tablet for the Tandy TRS 80. The Tablet will work with existing Color Computer software. The Touch Tablet should begin arriving in the Radio Shack network immediately.

CRITICALLY SPEAKING..COMMODORE 64-COMPATIBLE

KWIK-LOAD! is an ingenious, indispensable utility program—actually two programs in one—**DATAMOST** every owner of the Commodore 64 computer. Once you use this inexpensive little gem, you'll wonder how you ever lived without it. Although some Commodore owners seem blissfully unaware of the fact, the Commodore 1541 disk drive is a cumbersome creation that is maddeningly slow and downright user-hostile. **KWIK-LOAD!** helps to alleviate some of the frustration by speeding the disk loading time. **KWIK-LOAD!** itself loads in the usual way, though it's remarkably fast at only 5 seconds. (Loading times of several minutes are common among disk programs for the Commodore 64.) Once **KWIK-LOAD!** has been booted, the program is inserted into the drive and loaded in the usual manner. **Datamost** claims a 300% faster loading time with its program, which we verified with many programs. In fact, we found that some programs loaded up to 500% faster!

Not for Copy-Protected Disks

Unfortunately, **KWIK-LOAD!** has no effect on a number of commercial programs, and some can't be loaded at all after **KWIK-LOAD!** is installed. **Datamost** clearly states that the program works on "unprotected floppy disks which use Commodore DOS. It was not designed to load or copy commercially protected disks." (Commercially protected disks include all of the programs you would typically buy from a store, including packaged entertainment, business and home management software.) We tried **KWIK-LOAD!** on a wide variety of commercial programs with mixed results. A very small percentage of them wouldn't load at all, while most failed in the same amount of time with or without **KWIK-LOAD!** in place. A few of them loaded noticeably faster (150% to 300% faster). You would have to try **KWIK-LOAD!** on your library of purchased software packages to determine whether it could be used with any of them. However, the real value of **KWIK-LOAD!** lies in speeding the loading process with programs you write yourself, public domain programs obtained through users' groups, and programs copied from magazines and books.

Fast Copies

But there is more! This disk also contains the **KWIK-COPY** program, which will free you from the tyranny of constantly looking at the Commodore 1541 user's manual every time you need to copy or format a disk. **KWIK COPY** loads in about ten seconds and displays a colorful main menu. The first menu selection is "Kwik-Copy," which lets you copy an entire disk or just the active sectors onto a blank disk, with or without verification. Not only does this program perform the copying operation three times faster with a single drive (five times faster with two drives), but it also formats the blank disk *automatically* before it makes the copy. (Just think of the time and aggravation you'll save!) Individual files can also be copied, and "Kwik-Copy" will use the wild card feature, if desired.

Handy DOS Commands

Formatting a blank disk is another operation that can be a real pain in the neck with the 1541 drive. Unless you format disks often, you can never remember the correct commands and always have to look them up in the manual. After you've keyed in the proper commands, it then takes about a minute and twenty seconds for the drive to format the disk. With this **Datamost** program, formatting couldn't be simpler. All you have to do is select "DOS Commands" in the main menu, bringing up a sub-menu from which you select "Format Disk." The program will ask you to enter a name for the disk (up to 16 characters) and a two-character ID. Then it will prompt you to insert the blank disk and press "return." About ten seconds later you have a formatted blank disk. That's a mere one-tenth of the eighty seconds necessary if your 1541 drive hasn't been "souped up." Formatting is now a hassle-free procedure involving just a few keystrokes instead of a couple of difficult-to-remember commands.

More Utilities

Additional utilities on the "DOS Commands" sub-menu allow you to "scratch" or delete a file from your disk, rename a file, or update files to recover unused blocks on a disk. Going back to the main menu, you'll find a selection allowing you to edit a disk block and sector, one that performs a drive speed test, and another that displays a disk directory and allows you to write an alphabetized version of that directory to the disk.

Strengthening the Weak Link

Datamost should sell a ton of these wonderful disks. We've used other disk utility programs for the Commodore 64, but this is the best by far. **Datamost** has managed quite a feat: they have turned a stubborn, pokey tortoise of a disk drive into a swift, cooperative hare. **KWIK-LOAD!** and **KWIK-COPY** go a long way toward strengthening the one really weak link in an otherwise good system, the Commodore 1541 disk drive. This one is a must, especially at such a bargain price. (Registered owners of the program can obtain a back-up copy for only \$5.00.) Recommended. (MSR \$19.95)

GRAVE ROBBERS (★ ★ 1/2 / ★ ★ ★) is a graphic adventure in which you explore the terrors of a deserted graveyard. As the game opens, thunder claps sound and jagged streaks of lightning split the night sky. You enter



the graveyard and the gate crashes shut behind you. Like it or not, you have no choice but to proceed. As you feel your way through the darkness, lightning bolts occasionally reveal something of the shadowy shapes that lurk all around. Signs warn you to keep out. There's even the threat of a vicious dog, although he can be dealt with if you've found just the right object during your explorations. You'll encounter what seem to be dead ends, but there's always a way out!

Good for a Halloween Party

This is a good adventure game for a stormy night. It would also be great fun as entertainment for a group of trick-or-treaters at a Halloween party, because it has just the right theme. The adventure uses a simple, two-word, verb-and-noun parser, and a list of the acceptable verbs is included within the program where you can refer to it whenever you need to. One of the verbs is "help," and the program will sometimes give you a clue when this word is entered. That can be especially handy for those who are new to adventure gaming. **GRAVE ROBBERS** is not as involved as some of the more epic graphic adventures, making it ideal for beginning and intermediate adventurers. Graphics are simple but effective, and the game is very reasonably priced. (Solo Play; Keyboard; Single Disk has both Commodore 64 and VIC-20 versions.) (Planned for Adam.) MSR \$22.95

ADVENTURE PACK I and **ADVENTURE PACK II** (NA / ★ ★ ★) are identical to the text adventure programs for the Adam computer, which are reviewed elsewhere in this issue. (Solo Play; Keyboard; Single Disk for Commodore 64 and VIC-20.) Recommended. (MSR \$22.95 each)

ADAM Information From Reader

Our readers are out there beating down the bushes for information and we always appreciate it when you pass that information on to us. In turn, we can let everyone else know what's going on. We received a letter from George Knochel of Lakewood, Colorado (written on his ADAM, which he loves) who has been busy writing to the various software companies asking for ADAM software (we have published addresses of software companies before—and will do so again next month—and urge you to let these companies know what you want. It can make a difference!). He received a notice back from Infocom which indicates that they plan to develop a version of their games for ADAM. Infocom is in the early stages of development and, therefore, cannot predict when the software will be ready for shipment.

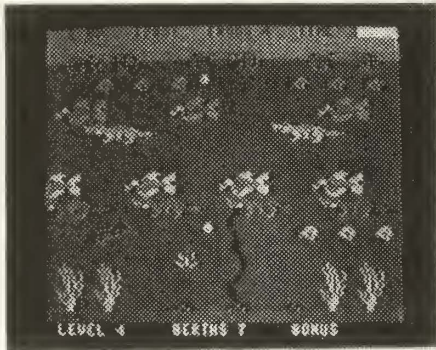
Meanwhile, Mr. Knochel passes on some good information, which you may not be aware of...that is, the ADAM has many parallel (not serial) ports allowing the connection of two data pack drives and two disk drives (all at once), the 64K memory expander (to 144K), modem, etc. Also, there is an "ADAM Universal Interface" bus coming to which can be connected just about any I/O device made by other companies.

CRITICALLY SPEAKING..COMMODORE 64-COMPATIBLE

FROGGER II: THREDEEP! (★★★½/★★★½) is a sequel to *Frogger*, one of the most successful arcade-to-home conversions ever. The lovable green jumper from the original Sega arcade game is back in an all-new adventure, making his timed way home to berths on three separate screens. No more highway traffic for Frogger! This time he braves the dangers of an underwater setting, a trip across the water's surface, and an implausible ride through the air. His underwater voyage toward log berths is complicated by strong currents, alligators, barracudas, and Larry the eel. The small fish merely get in his way, but the big ones can eliminate him on contact. Joe the diving turtle can be used for a free ride on this screen. He zigs and zags, keeping Frogger safe from the nastier denizens of the deep. Frogger can even take a ride off the edge of the screen on Joe's shell—a move that otherwise would turn him into a skull-and-crossbones symbol.

Ride a Duck to the Clouds

Frogger reaches the surface by jumping to the underside of a log berth. He hops his way to the tugboat-pulled life preserver berths using the tops of logs, lily pads, the backs of alligators, baby ducks, whales, hippos, and turtles. There are hungry sharks in these waters, and he must beware of the anger of mama duck if he hops onto one of her babies' backs. Falling into the water presents no particular danger—he simply sinks back to the



underwater screen, though he does lose some time. If Frogger jumps onto mama duck's back, she takes him for a ride to the third screen with its cloud berths in the sky. Since frogs can't fly, Frogger uses a cloud trampoline to reach the birds flying back and forth across the screen. By hopping from bird to bird, he can make his way to the cloud berths, perhaps even catching a ride with the stork, who will reward him with a new, baby Frogger! The trampoline also helps him reach one of his favorite delicacies, the butterflies. He has to be careful when munching butterflies, though, because that brings on Clyde the Dragon, a very unfriendly fellow. It also opens up holes in the clouds, and Frogger can fall back into the underwater or surface screens.

Better than the Original

FROGGER II: THREDEEP! will delight fans of the original amphibian adventure. Charming graphics, new music, and a large cast of amusing characters combine to create a sequel that's even better than the original. It's the variety of activities that make *FROGGER II* more interesting to play than *Frogger*. This is a great game for the whole family. (Solo Play; 2-Player Alternating; Joystick; Cartridge.) (Also available for Atari computers; for Atari 2600 and 5200, and for ColecoVision.)

Recommended. (MSR approx. \$40.00)

MONTEZUMA'S REVENGE (★★★½/★★★½) from Parker Brothers is essentially the same as the version for the Atari 5200, which is reviewed in the *Video Game Update* section of this issue. The game itself is identical, and graphics are only slightly more detailed. (Solo Play; Joystick; Dual-sided Disk has Atari computer version on other side; also available for Atari 2600, 5200 and ColecoVision; coming soon in dual-sided disk for Apple and IBM PC.)

Recommended. (MSR approx. \$40.00)

TAPPER (★★★½/★★★½) for the Commodore 64 is very similar to the Apple version which is reviewed elsewhere in this issue (solo play; 2-player alternating; pause; joystick or keyboard; disk) (Also available for Atari, C64, and IBM PC computers)

Recommended (MSR \$44.95)

IMPOSSIBLE MISSION (★★★★/★★★★) is a game of intrigue and espionage in which the player, as Special Agent 4125, must infiltrate the headquarters of Elvin Atombender, an evil professor intent on destroying the world. Elvin has managed to tamper with the missile attack computers of the major world powers, and he is believed to be working to break the computers' launch codes. He intends to repay the world for the injustice he suffered as a college student, when the power failed just as he was about to score 100 billion points on a computer game. "Giggling Penguin Invaders from Outer Space in the Vicinity of Ursa Minor." (We might have played that one once or twice ourselves!) Special Agent 4125 has been dispatched to enter Elvin's stronghold, evade the robot guards, break the security code, and find the control center in time to save the world. The tongue-in-cheek background scenario for this game is beautifully detailed in the instruction booklet, from a dossier on Elvin Atombender to an intelligence report on the workings of Elvin's stronghold. It's one of the best stories in support of a computer game that we've ever seen.

Voice Synthesis

As good as the introductory material is, it didn't prepare us for the excellence of the game itself. Through the magic of voice syn-

thesis, our Special Agent 4125 was greeted by evil Elvin himself, which put us in the proper mood immediately. (Elvin's commands to his robots are heard periodically throughout the game.) Agent 4125 begins his impossible mission on an elevator, which is used to reach corridors on various levels of the subterranean stronghold. Thirty-two rooms are then to be explored, their arrangement changed every time you play. The robots that guard them range from merely pesky to downright lethal. And they certainly get in the way as Agent 4125 searches the furniture (Elvin is definitely deranged) for hidden password to Elvin's security computer. Collecting these codes gives Agent 4125 the ability to deactivate robots temporarily, to reset lifting platforms in a room, or to start solving the puzzle of the password to Elvin's control room. When the agent has collected enough puzzle codes, he can turn to his pocket computer for help in solving the puzzle. This is an amazing little device, complete with icons for various functions and a white glove for pointing to them. (The wry humor continues: one of the icons shows two cat's paws, and it activates the "pause" feature of the game.)

Unarmed Agent

As Special Agent 4125 works to save the world, he encounters many surprises and some impossible situations. There are rooms with separate games that allow him to collect extra passwords for deactivating robots or resetting lifts. Some of the robots behave unpredictably, and dangerous floating orbs appear at the worst times. He must always have his wits about him to keep from falling off the bottom of the screen or running into a robot. And the poor guy has no weapons at all! Can you imagine the nerve of his Agency, expecting him to complete this very serious mission without a gun? His only defense against the robots is a very spectacular, mid-air forward flip that he can use to leap over obstacles.

Don't Miss this Game!

IMPOSSIBLE MISSION is one terrific game that you shouldn't miss. The graphics are beautiful, and the animation of Agent 4125 as he runs and somersaults is incredibly fluid. The game itself is totally absorbing, since it requires a good measure of both strategic thinking and action skills. The addition of voice synthesis is just icing on a very complex cake, but it's just the perfect flavoring for this action and strategy game. We're sure you'll love this one. (Solo Play; Pause; Joystick; Disk.) (Planned for Atari computers.)

Recommended. (MSR \$35.00)

CRITICALLY SPEAKING..

COMMODORE 64-COMPATIBLE

BLOCKADE RUNNER (★★★½/★★★½) is a first-person space game that's guaranteed to humble even the hottest video space cadets. The game puts you into the commander's seat, with a clear cockpit view of onrushing danger as you fly through an asteroid belt. Your job is to bring a fleet of four merchant space-freighters and their cargo to Earth, but hostile aliens are making that job awfully tough. They've forced you into an asteroid belt, where every collision threatens to overheat your shields. There are the deadly robot mines and alien ships to contend with, too. And you must be alert for the occasional clouds of blue ice crystals that allow you to cool your ship's shields and replenish the nuclear fusion fuel that powers your craft.

Win a Few, Lose a Few More

As you speed toward Earth, you gain points for distance covered, each mine or alien ship destroyed, each ice refueling, and for reaching your destination. But you can also lose points—for each second of time passed, each collision with an asteroid, each robot mine allowed to explode, and each ship in your fleet that is blown up. In fact, you'll soon discover that it's a lot easier to lose points in this game than it is to win them. Just wait 'til you see your final scores in the first few games you play! Would you believe minus 10,000 points or so? See what we mean about a humbling experience?

Unique Features

Not only is the scoring scheme unique in this game, but the program has the ability to adjust to your level of skill. The game program becomes increasingly difficult when it receives feedback that a skilled player is gaining points very quickly. It's not about to let you win easily! The nice thing about this mechanism is that it also keeps the difficulty from escalating too quickly when a novice is at the controls.

Different for Every Player

If you like first-person space games, and especially if you consider yourself a pretty skilled player, you just have to try this one. You may even want to throw a party to celebrate your first positive score! We liked this game in its original version for the Intellivision system, and it's even better for the Commodore 64. Graphics are very clean and colorful, with an especially good three-dimensional feeling evoked by the onrushing asteroids. And the unique, self-adjusting skill levels make the game a little different for every player. This one is a must for those who like space games. (Solo Play; Cause: Joystick; Disk.) (Also available for Intellivision; planned for ColecoVision.) Recommended. (MSR approx. \$39.00)

C64 TUTOR is actually two programs in one, both aimed at the computer novice. *TUTOR* is an interactive tutorial that introduces the beginner to the Commodore 64. It covers the basics, such as the keyboard, a brief discussion of RAM and ROM, and uses of the computer. *UTILITIES* contains a "Programmer's Calculator," working with numbers in decimal, hexadecimal and binary representation), a very simple word processor, a sprite editor that does the tedious calculations of sprite definition after the user has drawn the sprite, and "Music Maker" for playing music or making sound effects. All of the information contained in this set of programs can be found in various books and manuals for the Commodore 64, but many beginners will find this approach easier and more rewarding. We must stress that this program is for novices only. Those with even a little programming experience won't find much of real use here. (Disk and Cassette packaged together.) MSR \$29.95

Lode Runner for Macintosh

Broderbund's award-winning *LODE RUNNER* will be made available for Macintosh this fall with some changes to utilize the Mac's capabilities. You will be able to play with either the keyboard or mouse; the sound effects will make use of the Mac's four-channel capability; and the game will be displayed in Mac's super-high-resolution graphics for very fine detail. Suggested retail will be \$39.95

CRITICALLY SPEAKING..

ADAM-COMPATIBLE

ADVENTURE PACK I (NA/★★★) contains three, separate adventure games. "Moon Base Alpha," "Jack and the Beanstalk," and "Computer Adventure." The manufacturer states that the average solving time for each is about six hours, making them ideal for the beginning adventurer or anyone who doesn't have weeks or months to devote to the solving of a single adventure.



The Games

"Moon Base Alpha" lets you try to save lunar colonies from certain destruction by a meteor that is on a collision course with the Moon. You must figure out how to get a missile into the silo and launched before the meteor hits. "Jack and the Beanstalk" is based on the well-known children's tale. Your task is to get the hen that lays golden eggs from the giant. First you have to grow that famous beanstalk, and then you must figure out how to cross the alligator-filled moat to reach the giant's castle at the top of the beanstalk. Kids will love this one, but adults will enjoy it, too. "Computer Adventure" makes a game out of the process of saving to buy your first computer, then hooking it up and getting your first program running. Every computer owner will find something to identify with in this game. There are a lot of humorous touches, too, such as finding your congressman as one of your fellow convicts if you're jailed for shoplifting. All together, the three programs offer a nicely varied group of games. These are text adventures, so there are no pictures. All commands are entered as two words, verb and noun. A list of verbs that each program recognizes is part of the game and can be referred to anytime during play. Entering the word "help" will get you a clue in some parts of the games, which is especially good for beginning adventurers. These are good games at a very reasonable price. (Solo Play; Keyboard) (Also available on single disk for Commodore 64 and VIC-20.) Recommended. (MSR \$24.95)

ADVENTURE PACK II (NA/★★★) is another group of three relatively short adventures from Victory Software: "African Escape," "Hospital Adventure," and "Bomb Threat." The first one reminded us of Indiana Jones's plight in his latest movie. The game starts with you in a disabled plane that is on its way down over Africa. If you find your way out of that mess, you're dumped into the middle of a nearly featureless desert. There is an oasis, but you may have a little trouble finding it so that you can get on with your task of leaving the dark continent. "Hospital Adventure" casts you as a free world spy who has been ordered to assassinate the evil dictator of Gvench. He is recuperating from a botched assassination attempt in a very strange hospital. This one has lots of humorous touches, such as the hospital sign that reads "Eat in our cafeteria—we need more patients." In "Bomb Threat," you'll find yourself imprisoned by terrorists in a cell. You have to figure a way out of the cell and into town before the terrorists' bomb goes off. And getting out of the cell is the least of your problems in this one!

Entertaining Group of Games

Like *ADVENTURE PACK I*, this program consists of text adventures. You communicate your moves by typing in two-word, verb-and-noun commands. A list of all acceptable verbs is accessible from the program at any time, and you can even ask for "help." You won't always get a clue when you ask, but the clues will sometimes give you just the information you need. This is an entertaining group of short adventure games, suitable for beginning and intermediate adventurers. (Solo Play; Keyboard.) (Also available on single disk for Commodore 64 and VIC-20.) Recommended. (MSR \$24.95)

Datasoft Looking for Programmers

Datasoft joins an ever-growing list of software publishers advertising for both in-house staffers and submissions for Apple, Atari, C64, IBM PC/PCjr software. If you have a program or concept which you believe Datasoft would be interested in, send your submission to their New Product Development Manager at 19808 Nordhoff Place, (Evaluation criteria includes originality of concept, utilization of graphics and sound, playability, user-friendliness, and over-all appeal.) Chatsworth, CA 91311.

indication of their abandoning the system, you should note they have only committed to the computer through the end of 1984. With Tramiel's noted reputation of introducing non-compatible computers, we look to 1985 with some concern.

Secondly, they mention their support of video games in a highly vague sense. One source indicated to us that Atari plans to re-release many software titles for the 2600, 5200, and Atarisoft line which are sitting in their warehouses, at a new, lower price point. When we questioned the availability of new titles, it was evident that, other than some Atarisoft titles which did not see wide distribution earlier, the plan is simply to unload overstocked titles which would run the gamut of ASTEROIDS to SORCERER'S APPRENTICE. Our response to that was, "who cares — consumers want NEW titles!"

Regarding the LucasFilm games (BALLBLAZER and RESCUE ON FRACTALUS), the word is not immediately encouraging. We have learned that the deal with LucasFilm must be renegotiated before any titles can be released! Therefore, the future of those titles, at least via Atari, is in question. Could it be that we would see them released at a later date via another software company??? Frankly, as avid gamers, we don't care *who* releases them — only that they are released!

Channels of Distribution to Change

Finally, it appears highly likely that, regardless of the outcome of future Atari product, you will NOT be able to walk into your favorite specialty store and purchase future Atari product! We have been told that Atari will only be selling their product through a few major chains nationwide (most likely Toys R Us, Sears, K-Mart, etc.) and the distributors will be cut out. (Note: most retailers, other than major chains, purchase their product through distributors because as "buying direct" requires enormous orders and a large cash commitment. The majority of retailers simply cannot sell large quantities of each title). Again, there has been no formal announcement; however, this possibility exists.

And so another month goes by and several questions remain. In fairness to the new ownership, we're quite certain that they walked into a "hornet's nest"; however, we feel it would serve the consumer and the industry at large if they would make some definitive commitments. Third party suppliers are still nervous regarding present and future commitments to the entire Atari line, and most continue to take a "wait and see" attitude.

Could it be that Coleco will come out the winner on the gaming end and Apple/Commodore/ADAM will win out on the computer end by default?? Just asking...

Victory Software Develops New ADAM Titles

After success with Bounty Hunter and Adventure Packs I & II (Adventure Packs reviewed in this issue), Victory Software has let us know they are hard at work on additional titles.

The first is SAVINGS & LOAN, a calculator which works out interest rates, monthly payment schedules, loan durations, and lets the user determine the best deal when buying a house or car. The second is TREK, a title that Victory has had available for C64.

Grave Robber On Hold

Meanwhile, due to problems converting GRAVE ROBBER from C64 to Adam DataPack with the same amount of "pizzazz," Victory has temporarily shelved the ADAM version.

Sunrise Goes to ADAM DataPack!

In news which will strike joy in Adam owner's hearts, Sunrise has just converted several of their titles to the ADAM DataPack format! Included are QUEST FOR QUINTANA ROO, GUST BUSTER, CAMPAIGN '84, ROLLOVERTURE, and MOUNTAIN KING and the retail price on all titles is an attractive \$17.95!

Working On New Adventure

Meanwhile, they are working on a top secret adventure-type game which will be made available for ColecoVision, ADAM, C64, and Apple later in the year. Another new title, NUMBER BUMPER, is being readied for ColecoVision for release before Christmas; and the much-awaited MOUNTAIN KING for ColecoVision should be available before the end of September.

New ADAM Passes With Flying Colors

We bet you never thought you'd read it here but, it's true! We've done everything but throw our ADAM against the wall (we even considered doing that, but that seemed rather radical!), and it continues to run like a champ! We still stand by our opinion that the early ADAMs had tremendous problems (even Coleco would probably agree with us) and was introduced too quickly; however, we must applaud Coleco as they called in experts, seemingly rectified all the problems, and stood behind the new ADAM with an extended 6-month warranty (reminds us of the Mazda rotary engine which was a nightmare years ago, but when they introduced it on the RX-7, they showed their faith in the "new" rotary by offering a 50,000 mile warranty—that car has gone on to become one of the most reliable in its class.).

This Christmas should be the holiday season Coleco hoped for last year. In speaking with third party companies, we're beginning to note a change in attitude from them, also. While we're still not getting ADAM software commitments from them, we are not getting the resounding "NO" we once got. We're now getting a "we're waiting for a higher installed base" answer.

With the promise of the disk drive, 64K expansion module, and modem—all scheduled for release this month, all we can say is, "we're impressed with Coleco's tenacity!" Let's all hope for lots more software by Christmas—from Coleco and some of the other guys! We strongly expect the availability of the disk drive will greatly open up the software floodgates for this computer once Coleco sells a good number of them.

The ADAM is turning into a great buy for the first-time family home computer user and must be considered strongly when comparison shopping.

Amiga is Sold to Commodore

Amiga Corp., the developer of a 32-bit computer planned for release later this year, has been acquired by Commodore. This sale will allow Amiga to bring the computer to market, something that was in doubt due to the high cost of marketing. It will also allow Commodore to quickly, and easily, enter the high power end of computers without the cost and time involved in doing so in-house. The technical team of Amiga will be kept together, at least until the introduction of the computer. There has been a great deal of speculation about the power of this computer and excitement among third party suppliers of software who have had an opportunity to see a prototype of the system. In the prototype stage, the computer features the Motorola 68000 microprocessor (the same microprocessor used in Apple's Macintosh). The Amiga machine uses three custom graphics chips which promise the graphics power of the Mac, plus color graphics and clear 80-column text on a regular TV set.

Lawsuit With Atari

As soon as the sale was announced, Atari sued Amiga for alleged breach of contract. According to some sources, Amiga had made a commitment to Atari for the three graphics chips; however, we had learned that Amiga and Atari may have been in negotiation for the sale of Amiga to Atari. Commodore managed to slip in and grab Amiga out from under Atari's nose. This is just more evidence of the "war" which has been heating up between Tramiel and his old company—a war which started when he left Commodore in a power struggle last February. We expect to see a lot more fur fly before this is over—hopefully, the companies involved won't lose sight of what's best for YOU, the consumer, while they battle for the top of the home computer hill.

Power Stick Line Sold

In a non-related area, Amiga has sold its rights to its Power Stick Joystick line to Pride Electronics, the company which has manufactured the joysticks from the beginning.

Back issues are available for most issues of COMPUTER ENTERTAINER/VIDEO GAME UPDATE (none left of Vol 1, #1,2, or 3). Send \$2.00 for each back issue you wish. Buy any four for \$6.00 and any six for \$9.00. Make certain you have a complete set!! Remember, we reviewed over 325 games in 1983 alone!!!

CRITICALLY SPEAKING.. COMMODORE 64-COMPATIBLE

DAYSTAR
LEARNING CORPORATION

FACTACTICS TRIVIA GAME (★ ★ 1/2 / ★ ★ ★ ★) offers many options in a game that can be tailored to the players' desires. If you want a straightforward trivia game requiring speed and accuracy, it's here. If you'd prefer a tactical game that adds strategy to the tests of knowledge, that's here, too. And if you want to make up your own game, with only the features you like, you can do that, too.

A Typical Game

FACTACTICS has several topics: sports, music potpourri, rock and roll, TV, movies, Americana, and "The Big Mix" (questions from

all categories). Before the game begins, players enter their choice of category, type of game (Just the Facts, Facts Plus Facts, or custom game(s)).

And whether they want a typing timer that restricts the amount of time given each player to type in an answer once he or she has gained readiness to answer. Let's take a look at a typical "Facts Plus Tactics" game for two people to see how it works. A question appears on the screen with a blank or blanks as long as the correct answer. A timer begins counting down from ten until one player presses a key. The question is now worth the number of points remaining on the timer. The player types in the answer. If it's correct, his or her playing piece advances around the board a number of points equal to the count left on the timer. If incorrect, the other player gets a chance at the question. If the timer runs down without either player's stopping it, a clue is shown. (The clue is the answer with the letters scrambled.) The timer begins again, and the player first with the correct answer gets only half credit. Between every turn, a little character known as the Wise Guy advances around the board. Once he makes it all the way back to the home square, the game is over. Any player beating him to the home square is declared a "Whiz Kid" who can continue racking up points until the Wise Guy does reach the home square. However, the player who beats the Wise Guy home will be faced with a more challenging game. Points are subtracted for long answers, and the timer may start moving faster.

Special Squares

The "Facts Plus Tactics" game is made even more interesting with some special squares on the board. Landing on a Bonus Square gives a player the opportunity to answer a bonus question and earn double points for a correct answer. Flip-Flop Squares let the player answer a special question and earn the right to change places with the other player or the Wise Guy. A Freeze Square makes the Wise Guy stand still for one turn whenever he or one of the players lands on it. When the game is over, you'll notice that the game has a "Hall of Fame" that keeps a permanent record of high scores and Whiz Kids.

Loads of Fun to Play

We had a ball with this game, and we're not even trivia nuts! Although graphics and sound effects are fairly simple, the game loads of fun to play. Whether we played solo against the computer, against another player, or in teams, we didn't want to put away. The questions cover a wide range of knowledge and seem to be very well balanced. And the tactical elements make the game even more enjoyable. By the way, the designers plan four more single-category trivia games, covering such topics as sports, music, Americana, and showtime. (Solo Play; 2-Player alternating; Team Play; Keyboard; Disk.) (Also available for Apple II+/IIe/IIc, Atari computers, IBM PC/XT/PCjr.) Recommended. (MSR \$29.95)

THE TRIVIA ARCADE (★ ★ ★ / ★ ★ ★) combines the intellectual challenge of answering questions in five categories (sports, television, science, music, and general knowledge) with tests of eye-hand coordination in arcade sequences. Designed for one to four players, the game contains over 3,500 questions. (If that isn't enough for you, 4,000 additional questions in the categories of literature, movies, history, comics, and general knowledge can be incorporated by using *Question Pack I*, which is sold separately.)

The Questions

THE TRIVIA ARCADE begins with an optional action sequence in which the player has a limited time to capture a moving symbol representing one of the question categories. If the arcade sequence is bypassed, the computer generates questions randomly from the five categories. Some players will prefer the arcade method of question selection, because it makes it possible for players to favor their best categories. Next, it's on to the actual questions, which are answered with joystick or keyboard. (At the beginning of the game, players choose multiple choice or input options, the latter being more difficult because the player must know the correct answer and enter it on the keyboard.) Incorrect answers lead to a loss of turn, while the correct answer gives the player a turn on the gameboard.

Gameboard and Trivia Challenge

On the gameboard screen, hidden letters must be uncovered, one after each correct answer to a trivia question. The object on the gameboard is to uncover all the letters of the word "trivia" and move into the Trivia Challenge Arena. (Strategy comes into operation with multiple players, because moves can be blocked.) Once a player enters the Trivia Challenge Arena, he or she must answer correctly one question from each of the five categories. The computer generates one question per turn, repeating any category for which a question is answered incorrectly. The first player to answer one question from each category correctly wins the game.

Better for Groups

THE TRIVIA ARCADE is a better game for groups than it is for one person playing alone. Because no point scores are awarded, the solo player has no previous marks to compete against. Striving to beat one's previous best score is frequently an important motivation for the person playing alone. However, groups of two to four players will have a great time with the combination of skill, knowledge, and strategy this game demands. The questions seem to cover a wide range in most areas. However, we found that the music category tends to emphasize contemporary music, primarily rock and country, at the expense of other areas, such as folk or classical.

Brightly Colored Graphics

Although the content of the game is the main attraction, the brightly colored graphics and spirited musical backgrounds add a nice touch. However, graphics can create a problem when it comes to the text of the questions. For the same reason that word processing is difficult with a TV, the words of the trivia questions can be hard to read on a color TV. Players using a monitor instead of a standard TV will have an easier time. Aside from the structure of the game itself, we commend the designers for avoiding the long disk loading times between sequences that are often found in programs for the Commodore 64. Once the players have sat through the initial load, there are no waiting periods longer than a few seconds, even when loading more questions from the second side of the disk. (Solo play; 1- to 4-Player alternating; Joystick and/or Keyboard; Disk.) (Also available for Apple II+/IIe/IIc, Atari computers, IBM PC/PCjr.) Recommended. (MSR \$34.95; Question Pack I \$29.95)

JUNO FIRST (★ ★ / ★ ★) is identical to the translation of the Konami coin-op for Atari computers, which is reviewed elsewhere in this issue.

The Commodore 64 version is only slightly more colorful, but the graphics are still very plain. We found the controls a little stiffer than in the Atari version, requiring a bit more effort to move the player's ship. A straightforward shooting game—nothing original here. (Solo Play; 2-Player Alternating; Joystick; Pause; Disk/Cassette packaged together.) (Also available for Atari computers—see review in this issue.) Not recommended. (MSR \$29.95)

CRITICALLY SPEAKING..APPLE-COMPATIBLE

SUMMER GAMES (★★★★/★★★★) is one of those rare,

outstanding games which takes gaming just a step beyond. This version, as others, begins with the lighting of the flame and the now familiar "Bugler's Dream" with doves flying overhead. Once the ceremonies are over, the choice of countries begins (12 countries are represented) as each player must choose a flag for representation. A short version of that country's national anthem is played and then it's on to the competition.

Eight Sports Events

There are eight various events in which to compete which can be played in order, or you can choose to skip to any competition(s) you wish. Each event is very diverse and will require a great deal of skill to master (we found ourselves gaining a lot of 1.0's in events until we could get a good feel for them). Begin with Pole Vault, an exercise in extremely good timing as your runner must plant the pole just right in order to make it over

the ever-increasing bar height. Once the competitors have finished their jumps, there is a brief awards ceremony where the national anthem of the gold medalist is played.

The Grace of Diving

You have the opportunity to dive with the grace of Greg Louganis in the next event as Platform Diving takes center stage. Four dives must be performed with a smooth entry into the water (Louganis has nothing to worry about from us—we even managed a couple of belly-flops which would really hurt from a 20 meter platform!). It's on to track and field as you head for the 4 X 400-meter relay and 100-meter dash. In the relay, you must time your baton pass with finesse, while the 100-meter dash is just that—run as fast as you can (working the joystick side-to-side or up-and-down as quickly as possible) so you can get to the tape first. Here's your chance to beat Carl Lewis' records (it's fun to imagine, isn't it?)

On To Gymnastics

The gymnastics events are represented by the vault. Again, timing is of the essence as you attempt to land on the take-off board just right to achieve a strong vault (and land on your feet). This is another event which will take a good deal of practice. The scores are based on the same criteria as the real thing—execution and degree of difficulty.

After that workout, it's time to head for the pool again, this time for the 100-meter freestyle and the freestyle relay. Two players

can be in the pool at once as you learn how to get the most out of your stroke and kick. Lastly, you head for the Skeet Shoot range as you must attempt to hit 25 clay pigeons released from different points. This is the only game which resembles anything you've been used to as far as an "arcade type" event.

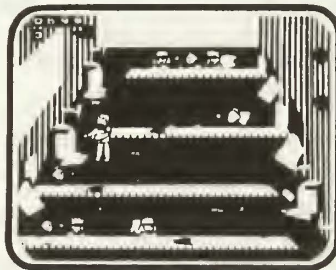
Simply Stunning

Every time we see this game in a different format, we continue to be awed by its beauty and depth. Having just had the opportunity to attend some of the L.A. Olympics certainly made this even more fun; however, we guarantee that this is a game that will truly withstand the test of time. Graphics, playability, and depth will find you going back to this over and over again for a long long time! (one player; up to 8 players alternating; 2-player, simultaneous in some events; joystick; disk) (also available for C64, Atari, IBM PC/PCjr; coming for ColecoVision) Recommended (MSR \$40.00)

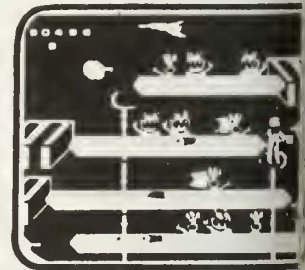
SEGA THE ARCADE EXPERTS **TAPPER (★★★½/★★★½)** is a home adaptation of the madcap arcade game by Bally Midway. In the original, an overworked bartender slides sudsy beers across bars to his thirsty customers. Probably in deference to family use, the home version has the barkeep slinging sodas. There are five screens, starting with the Old West Saloon and its four bars. As the game begins one customer moves along each bar from the left, while the player controlled bartender fills mugs from four taps on the right. The idea is to slide one mug to each customer before he or she reaches the bartender's end of the bar. Customers slide their empty mug back for the bartender to catch, and more customers begin entering the bar. Some customers leave tips, which can be collected for extra points, causing a pair of dancing girls to appear on the stage. Watch out when this happens—customers turn around to watch and can't catch any mugs the bartender might slide down the bar. The player loses a bartender any time a soda mug slides down the bar with no customer to catch it, whenever an empty mug crashes to the floor, or if a thirsty customer reaches the bartender's end of the bar without a drink. (In this last case, the irate customer slings the bartender down the bar!)

Soda Can Shuffle

Serving all the customers on a screen brings up the bonus round. The infamous "Soda Bandit" appears beneath a Mountain Dew soft drink poster and shakes five of the six soda cans on the bar. Then he shuffles the cans around in the manner of a con-man shell game, daring the bartender to find the one that won't explode in a shower of soda when opened. If the player finds the unshaken can, there is a bonus of 3000 points.



PUNK BAR



SPACE BAR

A Zany Game

Play continues to alternate between the bar scenes and the bonus rounds, with each succeeding bar zanier than the last. The sports men and women at the Jock Bar enter from the right in groups of three and even four, really keeping the bartender on his toes. The going gets tougher in the Punk Bar and Space Bar, with punks and space creatures emerging from the right on two bars and from the left on the other two. Each screen has its own music theme and distinctive decor, although you'll hardly notice the niceties once the game speeds up. TAPPER is cute and colorful! It will make you laugh and keep you very busy slinging mugs at fielding empties. The premise of the game is simple enough, but there's plenty of challenge. It's a fun-filled game for the whole family. (Solo Play; 2-Player Alternating; Pause; Joystick or Keyboard Disk.) (Also available for Apple, Atari and IBM PC computer Recommended. (MSR \$44.95)



RELAX, THE STRESS REDUCTION SYSTEM

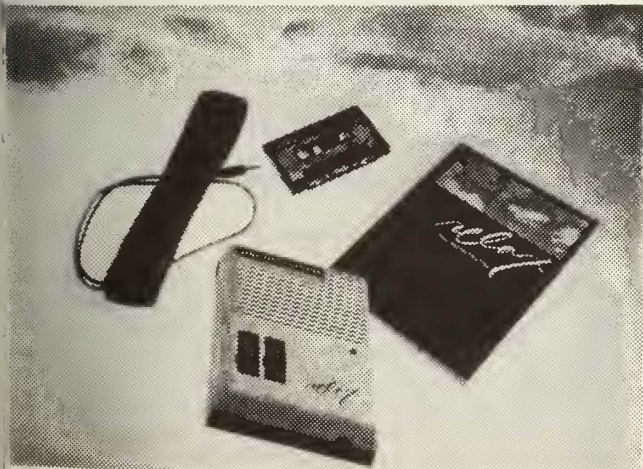
synapse

(★★★/★★★★) is a fascinating and innovative program for most home computers in which users can learn to decrease their tension

level and enter a state of deep relaxation. There are two versions available. The first is a combination Atari/Commodore 64 version which includes a disk and cassette for both computers as well as an audio cassette, headband with sensors, and Electromyograph Unit (EMG). The second version is a universal kit which includes all of the above, as well as a disk for Apple and IBM PC/PCjr and a set of adaptor cables. This universal version is perfect for anyone who wishes to share it with friends who own various home computers.

To Begin

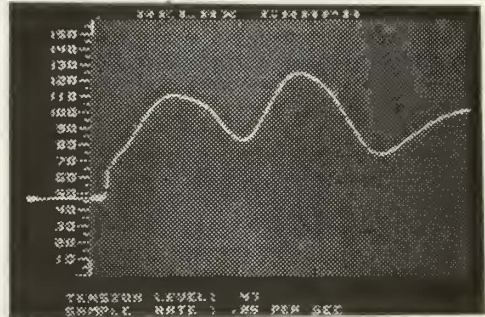
We decided the best way to test the unit was to have our most hyperactive reviewer sit down with it to see if she could gain benefits from its use. It was set up in a quiet room with a comfortable chair. The headband was put on (*extremely easy and comfortable*). It is made of light-weight material with a velcro closing which can be adjusted to any head size which is much more comfortable and stable than Atari's Mindlink which we tried at Summer C.E.S. We plugged into the EMG unit which is a small, battery-operated "box" with adjustments for RANGE and FINE TUNE so each user can adjust sensitivity almost infinitely. The EMG Unit was then plugged into our computer. The instructions indicated we should adjust the tension level on the EMG unit to about 450 (500 being the highest). Sample rates available on the Relax Graph are the number of readings being taken off the headband per second. There are eight different rates available which can measure everything from rapid tension associated with fleeting distressful thoughts to a more drawn out level which allows you to observe your tension level over a longer period of time on the graph. Once she felt comfortable with the adjustments, we began the audio cassette enclosed with the program. The announcer on the tape took us through the preliminary instructions of how to use the Relax Graph, while the tone of his mesmerizing voice helped her relax a great deal. While she had a difficult time bringing her level of tension down at first, the more she sat back with the graph and listened to the tape (with sounds of the ocean, birds, etc.) she found herself gaining the response on the graph we were hoping for. (At one point, another reviewer walked in the room, looked at the extremely low reading on the graph, and thought we'd lost her!)



The Sensoral Kaleidoscope

After working with the graph and becoming efficient in controlling the tension levels, we moved on to **THE SENSORAL KALEIDOSCOPE**, a semi-hypnotic visual imagery of multi-colored and multi-patterned kaleidoscopes. After adjustments to the EMG unit, we found that tension produced bright patterns, which became progressively darker and more muted the more relaxed we became. As we relaxed more, the kaleidoscope splits, and the two halves moved toward the top and bottom of the screen. Another kaleidoscope in a different color emerged in the center. The splitting, according to the manual, represents your achievement of a lower tension level. If you tense, the previous kaleidoscope moves onto the screen from the top and bottom and joins in the middle. The kaleidoscope will react to small tension changes by changing the pattern from many epicenters to one centrally pulsating figure.

It's a fascinating experiment with beautiful colors and patterns—one that can mesmerize you!



The Balloon Game

It was now time for us to reap the rewards of our learning to control our tension levels by moving on to **THE BALLOON GAME**. Here, we controlled the flight of a balloon with nothing more than the muscles in our forehead. (Again, this is reminiscent of the Atari Mindlink in which no joystick is used.) The balloon floats through the air and you must catch bubbles entering from the right while avoiding the pins which enter from the left. We found a great deal of knowledge about our ability to control tension as we all did quite well moving the balloon up and down (if you clench your teeth, you can watch the balloon quickly sail to the top of the screen and spin madly), avoiding pins and catching bubbles.

More Than a Game

Although the kids would certainly enjoy the "no hands" aspect, this is far more than a gimmick. Included in the instruction booklet is a chapter on the benefits of deep relaxation which gives good basic information on the subject. Also available, but not included with the RELAX program, is an excellent book on stress and biofeedback. (Synapse will offer a \$5.00 rebate for the purchase price of the book when accompanied with a proof of purchase of the RELAX System.) The book, written by Martha Davis, Ph.D., covers detailed explanations of what stress is, how biofeedback works, training techniques, and ways to analyze your own stress problems. A detailed stress profile is included which will help you pinpoint the major sources of stress in your life, leading toward self-awareness, self-hypnosis, management of time, thought and job stress, and more. This is an easy-to-read book which is a terrific adjunct to the program itself.

Add to the Program Yourself

Synapse has not write-protected the program to enable users to add relaxation and biofeedback programming of their own. In fact, a representative told us there has been extreme interest by independent programmers to work on programs for the physically handicapped, children with learning disabilities, etc. The benefits of such programming are only limited by one's imagination!

Continues to Impress Us

After initially sitting with the program, we left it set up. We wanted to go back to the program several times, especially after a tense day of shooting down aliens and driving on the Los Angeles freeways, to see how beneficial it is. We found it helped us "unwind" and put us more in touch with the stress around us. With the world moving as quickly as it is around us, RELAX would prove extremely beneficial to one's mental health time and time again. Synapse has taken us in one more direction which shows the untold value of owning a home computer—helping us cope with day-to-day life!

Recommended (MSR — Atari/Commodore version - \$99.95; Universal version - \$139.95; book available separately at \$9.95)

THE VIDEO GAME UPDATE

CRITICALLY SPEAKING..ATARI 5200-COMPATIBLE

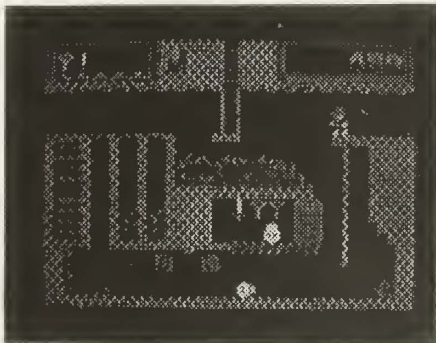
MONTEZUMA'S REVENGE (★★★½/★★★½) is an original game featuring the daring Panama Joe in a quest for the hidden treasures in Montezuma's fortress. This is an action game with many screens and lots of seemingly impossible situations. Game play is similar to Big Five's *Miner 2049er* and Epyx's *Jumpman*, while the setting is reminiscent of an Indiana Jones adventure.

PARKER BROTHERS

The Quest for Treasure

As Panama Joe runs, jumps and climbs through Montezuma's fortress, he gathers amulets, jewels, keys, swords, and torches.

These are displayed in an inventory window which can hold up to five objects at a time. Amulets can disable killer creatures, jewels add points, keys open color-coded doors, swords eliminate spiders or skulls, and torches light Joe's way through the otherwise dark passages deeper in the fortress. Many chambers in the fortress contain traps, such as laser gates, disappearing floors, and fire pits. The only way Joe can survive these dangers is through the player's skillful maneuvering of the joystick. Along with the features of the fortress itself, there are the requisite nasty creatures, always deadly to the touch. Panama Joe makes his way through the scary chambers as best he can, never knowing what danger may lurk around the next corner. If the player can keep him alive long enough, Joe finally encounters the Treasure Chamber itself, a fabulous room full of glittering jewels. This is the only segment of the game which is timed, allowing Joe to jump from chain to chain, gathering treasures until time runs out and the player moves to the next difficulty level. (There are nine levels in all; the player can choose to start on any of the first three.)



Exciting and Frustrating Game

Exciting and Frustrating Game

Although there are a number of familiar elements in this game, it cannot be considered a copy. The Parker Brothers designers have simply combined several elements known to appeal to game players in the hope of creating a new hit. We think they have an excellent chance of doing so with this exciting and frustrating game. For a game to be frustrating is not necessarily a negative quality, as avid game players know. There's nothing more endearing to a dedicated game player than the challenge of beating a seemingly impossible situation, of finding just one more chamber, or of discovering the perfect combination of moves to reach a formerly unreachable object. *MONTEZUMA'S REVENGE* provides just this kind of challenge. It packs a lot of action into one game and will keep most players happily entertained for many hours. The nicely detailed, colorful graphics support the play action well. (Solo Play; Pause.) (Also available for Atari 2600 and ColecoVision; dual-sided disk for Atari and Commodore 64 computers; coming soon on dual-sided disk for Apple and IBM PC.) Recommended. (MSR approx. \$40.00)

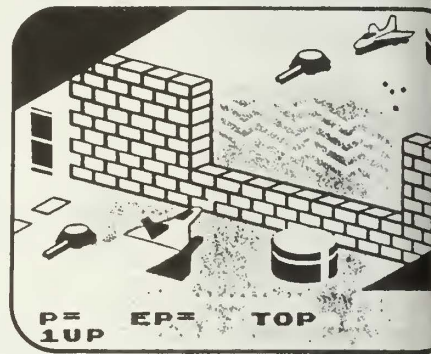
FROGGER II: THREEDEEP! (★★★½/★★★½) is essentially the same as the version for the Commodore 64 computer, which is reviewed in the *Computer Entertainer* section of this issue. The only real difference is in the control scheme for the 5200. The joystick option requires moving the stick in the direction of Frogger's desired jump and then pushing one of the firing buttons. The keypad option (which we prefer) uses four buttons on the keypad to produce jumps to the left or right, forward or backward. Those who own the original Parker Brothers version of *FROGGER* will recognize this as the same set of control options used on that game. (Solo Play; Pause.) (Also available for Atari 2600 and ColecoVision; for Atari and Commodore 64 computers on cartridge.) Recommended. (MSR approx. \$40.00)

ZAXXON (★★★½/★★★) is a home-screen adaptation of Sega's arcade game by Sega itself. One might expect Sega's designers to know the game intimately and be able to create a best-ever translation for the Atari 5200. The result of their efforts is one of those "good news-bad news" stories, however. The game is good, but not as good as it could have been.

SEGA
THE ARCADE EXPERTS

Over the Asteroids

Nearly every video game fan is familiar with the workings of *ZAXXON*. The player controls a space-fighter which flies diagonally across the screen, moving over three-dimensional asteroid fortresses on the way to meet the great robot, Zaxxon. Using an altimeter and the shadow beneath the fighter to gauge the ship's position, the player guides the fighter through openings in walls and under electronic barriers while strafing surface emplacements on the asteroid floor and avoiding enemy fire. Fuel can be replenished by knocking out fuel depots. Leaving the asteroid, the player's fighter moves into an onslaught of enemy ships in space before moving to the next asteroid fortress and the encounter with the deadly robot. The robot must be hit six times before it launches its missiles. Defeating the robot allows the player to graduate to the next level and more challenges.



Missing Some Elements

Until now, the Atari 5200 has been one of the few systems without an adaptation of *ZAXXON*. That has changed with the release of this cartridge by Sega. While this version has retained much of the three-dimensional look of the coin-op, it is missing some elements that would have made it a more literal translation of the arcade game. We missed the rockets that are launched periodically from the asteroid floor in other versions. Without them, the asteroid fortresses seemed a bit barren. We don't understand why the player's fighter automatically loses altitude in outer space in the 5200 version. This leaves the player with only side-to-side control of the ship. Also, the enemy ships in space attack in a very orderly fashion. We would have preferred the erratic movement displayed by enemy ships in other versions of *ZAXXON* that we've played. This adaptation of *ZAXXON* for the Atari 5200 is fun to play, but it could have been better. Certainly the flights over the asteroid fortresses would have been more challenging with rockets launched randomly from the asteroid floor. The graphics are undeniably crisp and three-dimensional, but they're almost entirely blue and gray. A little more color would have helped. At least 5200 owners have a version of *Zaxxon* to play now, but it could have been a more exciting translation. (Solo Play; 2-Player Alternating Pause.) (Also available for Atari 2600, ColecoVision and Intellivision by Coleco; for Atari and Commodore 64 computers on cartridge by Sega; for Apple and Atari computers on disk by Datasoft for Commodore 64 on disk by Synapse; for IBM PC on disk by Sega; Coming soon for Adam on data-pack by Coleco.) (MSR approx. \$40.00)

Could This Be True??

We just heard a rumor from inside Atari that we just had to pass along. Word has it on the inside that Jack Tramiel plans to manufacture 6 million (that's right—6 million) 2600 VCS game systems for sale at Christmas!! If this is true, let's throw technology out the door entirely and also bring back the VIC-20!

If Tramiel has found a really inexpensive way to produce the 2600, this could be the ultimate way to sell off all the old cartridge sitting in the warehouse. A really inexpensive (under \$30) 2600 would reach an entirely new gaming public.

CRITICALLY SPEAKING..

COLECOVISION-COMPATIBLE

H.E.R.O. (★★★½/★★★) is a multi-screen rescue game from Activision set in the caverns of a volcanic mine. It is a literal translation of the game designed originally for the Atari 2600 with considerably enhanced graphics. The player controls "R. Hero," founder of H.E.R.O. (Helicopter Emergency Rescue Operations). This little guy with a helicopter prop-pack strapped to his back descends into a treacherous series of tunnels and shafts to rescue trapped miners. The prop-pack lets him fly and hover through a multitude of subterranean screens, zapping deadly creatures with his helmet's microlaser beam and blasting through solid walls by setting dynamite charges. The mine passages are lit, but R. Hero can be plunged into instant (and dangerous) darkness by inadvertently shooting or bumping into one of the mine lamps. The deeper R. Hero descends, the more surprises lurk around every corner. Portions of walls and floors become deadly to the touch, and there is a lethal river of lava to be crossed. The player earns points for every rescued miner and every destroyed creature. And R. Hero must be guided carefully but quickly, because the energy in the prop-pack wanes over time.

Scary Surprises

We enjoyed the earlier Atari 2600 version of *H.E.R.O.*, and his adaptation is equally good. It offers unrelenting action and plenty of scary surprises in a game that's easy to learn but difficult to master. As you become more accomplished and learn some of the successful patterns, you can start at higher difficulty levels. We like not having to revisit the earlier levels just to get the "good tuff." Although the game plays very much like the 2600 version, the graphics are much more detailed in this one for ColecoVision—this they should be. (Solo Play) (Also available for Atari 2600 and 200, and for Atari and Commodore 64 computers.) Recommended. (MSR \$34.95)

CRITICALLY SPEAKING..

ATARI 2600-COMPATIBLE

MONTEZUMA'S REVENGE (★★★/★★★½) is similar to the version for the Atari 5200, which is reviewed elsewhere in this issue. The graphics in the 2600 version are necessarily less detailed, and there are fewer screens. Nine levels of difficulty in the other versions have been reduced to three in this one. However, the game compares very well to others for this system, offering plenty of challenge. Especially now, with fewer new games being released for the 2600, this would make a great addition to your collection. (Solo Play) (Also available for Atari 5200 and ColecoVision; on dual-sided disk for Atari and Commodore 64 computers; coming soon on dual-sided disk for Apple and IBM PC.) Recommended. (MSR approx. \$40.00)

FROGGER II: THREDEEP! (★★½/★★★½) is similar to the version for the Commodore 64 computer, which is reviewed in the *Computer Entertainer* section of this issue. The 2600 version has all three screens, and there are some minor differences in the characters. For example, the underwater screen includes submarines that none of the other versions have. The graphics are not as good as those of the original Parker Brothers *Frogger* for this system, however. With the large number of objects on the screen, there is quite a bit of blinking of the characters. This version of *Frogger II* plays as well as the others, though. (Solo Play) (Also available for Atari 5200 and ColecoVision; for Atari and Commodore 64 computers.) Recommended. (MSR approx. \$40.00)

(Editor's Note: We have adopted the convention of reviewing all ColecoVision/Adam programs that are in cartridge format under the heading "ColecoVision-Compatible" in the Video Game Update section. Programs that are for Adam ONLY (data-pack format) are reviewed under the heading "Adam-Compatible" in the Computer Entertainer section.)

MAKE YOUR FEELINGS KNOWN!

Although no definitive word has come out of Atari regarding their future plans regarding the 7800 and videogames in general, it is time for ANYONE who is concerned to write directly to Atari and make their feelings known.

We URGE all of our concerned readers to sit down TODAY and write directly to Atari and we also urge our readers to talk to all their gaming friends to do the same. There is always a chance that if enough people write to express their concerns that it could effect Atari's decision in the gaming area. It is critical that you get as many people to write as possible. We have never seen so much interest in a new gaming system (even the ColecoVision did not garner as much advance interest from our readers!) and it's imperative that we all let Atari know how we feel. Computer Entertainer, of course, has told Atari what we feel; however, they need to hear it DIRECTLY FROM THE CONSUMER—YOU!!!

Write NOW to:

Jack Tramiel
Atari Corp.
1265 Borregas Avenue
P.O. Box 3427
Sunnyvale, CA 94088-3427

You should also send a copy of your letter to:

James Copland
Vice President Marketing
Atari Corp. (at the same address)

Do it NOW—tomorrow could be too late!!

Our phones have been ringing off the hooks and our mailbox has been stuffed by concerned readers regarding the future of videogames at Atari. In that light, we'd like to print excerpts from two letters which are representative of what we're hearing from all over the country.

Dear CE/VGU:

I am one more person who had planned to buy a 7800. Two of my friends were planning on it, too. The fact that Atari won't market things already manufactured shows that they are planning to take the radical step of getting out of videogames, even if it destroys the hobby. It speaks of a "public be damned" attitude.

JC
Storrs, CT

Dear Editors:

...I saw your article on collectors of videogames. This was only fitting, because if Jack Tramiel has his way, that is all that we will be—collectors of old video games. With 15 million Atari VCS's out there along with 1.5 million 5200's and a million people like me anxious for the 7800, the question remains: How could this happen? Can't something be done?" How can they withdraw the 7800 after it already received heavy TV advertising in the New York area?

Atari was the leader, the innovator, the cutting edge. The Lucasfilm games and the 7800 promised to usher in the renaissance of home videogames.

*Then came Tramiel.
This is video's darkest hour.*

JH
Manchester, CT

Imagic Readies ColecoVision Tennis

Imagic is busy finishing several previously announced projects for various systems; however, we've been told they are working on *TOURNAMENT TENNIS* for ColecoVision! They are also very excited about their first graphic text adventure, *SHERLOCK HOLMES ANOTHER BOW*, which is scheduled for Christmas in the Apple and IBM PCjr formats. Their Living Literature series will kick off with *DAMIANO*, a fantasy text adventure for Apple. They are also planning a brand new title, initially for C64, entitled *CHOPPER HUNT* due in the middle of October.

Football for PCjr Shipped

For those of you PCjr owners who have been waiting for Imagic's *FOOTBALL*, it has released, under the IBM name initially! For an unspecified period of time, you can purchase the game in IBM Product Centers before Imagic repackages the program and distributes it themselves.

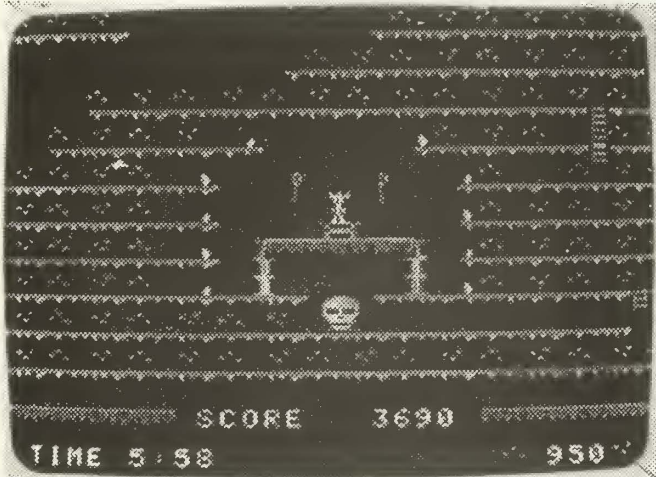
CRITICALLY SPEAKING..COLECOVISION-COMPATIBLE

MOUNTAIN KING (★ ★ ★ 1/2 / ★ ★ ★ ★) is an excellent adaptation of a game released initially for Atari computers by CBS Electronics. (CBS has since discontinued their line of entertainment titles, concentrating now on educational programs under the banner of CBS Software.) Sunrise has kept the magic alive in this latest version, which is good news for ColecoVision/Adam owners.



Diamonds in the Dark

The player controls an explorer whose goal is to be crowned Mountain King before time runs out in the game. The explorer has the grace of Rudolf Nureyev as he leaps about the ledges within the dark mountain mine, gathering sparkling diamonds from the cavern walls. He carries a flashlight which casts a blue beam into the gloom whenever the player touches the firing button, occasionally illuminating a hidden treasure chest. As the explorer collects diamonds, dark shapes are seen fluttering against the brilliance of the gems. These are the cave bats, and their interference will affect the explorer later in the game. The Giant Spider is another pest, always trying to catch the explorer in its sticky web.



Musical Clues

Diamonds are worth points, and collecting enough of them makes the nearly invisible Flame Spirit available. At this point, the game really becomes interesting because the Flame Spirit can only be found by moving toward the location within the mountain where the music is loudest. (The Flame Spirit's theme is "Anitra's Dance" from Grieg's Peer Gynt Suite.) Once the explorer possesses the Flame Spirit, he wears a sparkling halo. He must rush to the opening of the Temple and offer the Flame Spirit to the Skull Spirit, enter quickly and capture the Golden Crown. The speed of the explorer's dash to the top of the mountain is echoed by the urgency of the musical theme, Grieg's "In the Hall of the Mountain King." The cave bats will try to steal the crown, but the explorer must reach the perpetual flame at the peak with the crown still on his head in order to be crowned "Mountain King."

Totally Enchanting

MOUNTAIN KING is a wonderful game that achieves a magical blend of exciting music, pretty graphics, and graceful play action that is totally enchanting. It is an action adventure that never fails to keep us enthralled and challenged, no matter how many times we have already played the game. Though there are familiar elements, there is no other game quite like it. This one is a must for your collection. (Solo Play) (Also available on data-pack for Adam computer from Sunrise. Also made for Atari 2600, 5200 and computers by CBS Electronics. Since these cartridges were discontinued, they may be difficult to find.) Recommended. (MSR \$19.95)

Epyx Bumps ColecoVision Game

For those anxiously awaiting the release of **SUMMER GAMES** for ColecoVision, the wait has just been extended to sometime in late '84/early '85. Several titles for various systems have been moved to the fourth quarter (see Availability Update).

FROGGER II: THREEDEEP! (★ ★ ★ 1/2 / ★ ★ ★ 1/2) is essentially the same as the version for the Commodore 64 computer, which is reviewed in the *Computer Entertainer* section of this issue. The main difference is the absence of the two-player game. (Solo Play) (Also available for Atari 2600 and 5200; for Atari and Commodore 64 computers.) Recommended. (MSR approx. \$40.00)

MONTEZUMA'S REVENGE (★ ★ ★ 1/2 / ★ ★ ★ 1/2) from Parker Brothers is nearly identical to the version for the Atari 5200 which is reviewed elsewhere in this issue. (Solo Play) (Also available for Atari 2600 and 5200; on dual-sided disk for Atari and Commodore 64 computers; coming soon on dual-sided disk for Apple and IBM PC.) Recommended. (MSR approx. \$40.00)

THE ACTIVISION DECATHLON (★ ★ ★ ★ / ★ ★ ★ 1/2) is the most physically demanding of all the video games inspired by the Olympics. It was also the first of its type, making a debut just over a year ago in its original version for the Atari 2600 by David Crane. The real decathlon—as anyone who watched TV in August must know—is that most grueling of competitions, requiring the athlete to do his best in ten track-and-field events. In the Olympics, the events are completed in two days, but the folks at Activision have compressed the action into perhaps thirty minutes.

Pump that Joystick!

The events in this game are the 100-meter dash, long jump, shot put, 400-meter run, 100-meter hurdles, discus, pole vault, javelin, and (the killer) 1500-meter race. If you've never played any version of this game, you are in for quite a surprise. Everything starts out calmly enough as two extremely well animated athletes trot along the track to the accompaniment of the familiar musical theme from the Olympics ("Bugler's Dream"). Then the gun signals the start of the 100-meter dash, and you must pump your control knob or joystick back and forth just as fast as you can to make your athlete run. A strength bar at the bottom of the screen shows just how close to maximum strength your little guy is working. Finish the race, and it's on to your three tries at the long jump. More pumping of the joystick builds your athlete's speed until you hit the action button just before the scratch line. The shot put and high jump work similarly. To complete the first half of the decathlon, still more pumping of the joystick pushes your athlete through the 400-meter race. By this point, you are perspiring and your pulse is noticeably faster—and you still have five events to go! You get through four more events somehow, but they've saved the arm- and joystick-breaker for last. You have no idea how long 1500 meters can seem until you've tried Activision's version. After you've survived all ten events, you don't care as much about winning as you do about finding some Gatorade—and fast!

Video Aerobics?

DECATHLON has some of the smoothest animation ever seen on this system, along with beautifully detailed graphics. Sound effects, except for the opening music, are curiously absent. (Crowd noises might have been nice.) But play action is the star in this one. Very few video games will ever give you this kind of total experience. The thrill of competition against friend or computer is present in most games, but the total physical involvement of this one is unique. Surely this must qualify as aerobic exercise! While it tests the player physically, it's also a terrific strain on the controller. We strongly recommend that you NOT subject the ColecoVision controller to repeated sessions of this game—it simply can't take the punishment. Strongly constructed, long-throw joysticks, such as the popular Wico bat-handle model, can take the stress. However, a long throw creates more work for the player. What worked best for us was the Newport Prostick III, which has a steel shaft for strength and a shorter throw than the Wico models. If you're ready for a physical workout with your video gaming, give **DECATHLON** a try. (Solo Play; 2-Player Alternating and Simultaneous, depending on event.) (Also available for Atari 2600 and 5200; for Atari and Commodore 64 computers.) Recommended. (MSR \$34.95)

BOOK REVIEW

IG COMPUTER GAMES published by *Creative Computing* includes a variety of 12 challenging games to be played on your home computer. Included is a description of each game, programming (written in standard Microsoft Basic which can be adapted to most home computers), and sample run. Among the interesting programs included are Cribbage, the well-known card game; Lost Forgotten Island, a cooperative survival game; Star Merchant, futuristic trading simulation; Dukedom, a land management game; Presidential Campaign, where you simulate the nine months prior to a presidential election; Streets of the City, where you manage the transportation system of a small city; among others.

Articles Included

There are some fascinating articles also, including "How to Write an Adventure," "An Adventure Framework," and "Adventures in Videoland," an introduction into the fascinating world of computer/laserdisc interfacing. With a combination of an Apple computer, Pioneer laserdisc system, and an Aurora Systems Interface, the author has provided an actual program, Roller Coaster. With a laser disc, a person can see the motion sequences where other authors would have them described by the computer program. A detailed flow chart of the program is also given as insight to this exciting new area of interactive gaming.

All in all, there are some excellent programs included and we found the article regarding the interactive video disc fascinating. All programs are printed straight from the actual computer readouts to avoid any typos on the part of the publisher. Recommended (MSR \$9.95)

MASTERING YOUR ATARI THROUGH EIGHT BASIC PROJECTS

published by *Prentice Hall* and written by the staff of *MICRO Magazine* is a combination book and disk which includes complete running program, a utility, or game. The eight projects include MICRO CALC, a miniature spreadsheet program; GUESSMASTER, a guessing game for one or two players; ATARI LOCK, which displays time and teaches ON...GOSUB function and character graphics; WORD DETECTIVE, allowing you to learn the computer's rule regarding accepting and rejecting the words you type, as well as string manipulations; ATARI PLAYER, a music teaching program; SORTING; BREAKUP, a bouncing-ball game; and PROGRAMMABLE CHARACTERS, in which you learn how to redefine character sets.

Program If You Wish

In order to save the frustration of many books which include a program after program which must be entered into the computer in order for it to work even in its easiest form, the disk provides a basic program for each of the eight projects. Then, depending on your skill and adventuresome spirit, you can enhance, add levels, change, and generally manipulate the various programs. The book is quite informative, with good descriptions and program listings; however, a fundamental knowledge of BASIC is recommended for the best use of the tutorial.

ADAM Scholarship Program

Coleco is pulling out all the stops for ADAM and its acceptance as a strong entry in the family home computer arena. The \$500 ADAM Family Computer Scholarship Program is being initiated for consumers who purchase the ADAM or ADAM Expansion Module between September 1 and December 31, 1984. The rules are as follows: the recipient of the scholarship must be under 18 as of September 1, 1985 and must be enrolled before age 19 in an accredited, four year undergraduate program. The \$500 scholarship will be payable in four equal payments of \$125.00 per year and the recipient must submit a "proof of good standing" (such as a report card) within ninety days of the end of each school year in order to receive a check for that year.

How Fast Is Fast?

Many people starting out with their first computer purchase a cassette tape drive for economical storage of data and input of purchased programs not available on cartridge. After a little experience, they may become impatient with the slowness of these devices and their occasional lack of reliability. Then it's back to the computer store to buy a disk drive because of its speed and reliability, along with the availability of more complex programs in diskette format. It's quite true that disk drives are speedier at information storage and retrieval than cassette drives, but are all disk drives equally swift? Absolutely not!

We work with disk drives on several systems nearly every day, and we have known subjectively that there is a big difference among the three systems most favored by our computer-owning readers. The most popular computer among our readers is the Commodore 64, followed by the Atari family of computers, the Apple II family, Adam, TI 99/4A, and a group of assorted others, such as Macintosh, IBM PC and PCjr, and TRS-80.

We decided to run an informal test as soon as we could find an appropriate piece of software that was as close to identical as possible in versions for our "big three." We could have run the test with an Infocom adventure, but we decided to go with *Financial Cookbook*, since Electronic Arts had kindly provided review copies in all three formats. Using original equipment disk drives only—no third-party drives and no special software to speed up the operating systems—we loaded the appropriate version of *Financial Cookbook* three times in each system's disk drive: Commodore 64, Atari 800, and Apple IIe. Apple was fastest at an average load time of 15 seconds; Atari came in second at 55 seconds, while Commodore was the slowpoke at 180 seconds. (Note: there are faster disk drives than Apple's; it was merely the fastest in our group of three.) While there are many other considerations in deciding which computer system to choose, speed of the disk drive is seldom mentioned in sales literature. However, it's an important part of normal operation, affecting not only set-up time, but also the amount of "dead time" as the drive loads the next scene of an adventure game, a file of word processing data, or whatever. We have been surprised at how few people are aware of these differences among systems, and we thought you'd like to know.

Intellivision Update

We spent some time on the phone with the people at Intellivision Inc. as we are approaching the time originally anticipated for product release. It's a "Good News, Bad News" situation. While they have just begun production on Intellivision software, the titles are not, at least yet, anything New. The titles planned for immediate production include Masters of the Universe, Burgertime, Bump N' Jump, etc.—in other words, recent titles which had sold well for Mattel. We asked for a sales sheet to see what new titles were listed for release within the next three to four months and we saw nothing in new titles whatsoever. We may have to wait until the Winter C.E.S. for any further word; however, we are understandably concerned that by the time there might be new titles, it could be a moot point. Perhaps Intellivision owners will have given up by then and relegated their machines to the closet or Goodwill.

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AVAILABILITY UPDATE

ATARI 2600

SEPTEMBER
Circus Charlie (PB)
Frogger II: Threedeeep (PB)
Montezuma's Revenge (PB)
Mr Do's Castle (PB)
Tarzan (COL)

COLECOVISION

AUGUST

Circus Charlie (PB)
x-Decathlon (ACT)
Frogger II Threedeeep (PB)
x-H.E.R.O. (ACT)
Mr Do's Castle (PB)

SEPTEMBER

Brain Strainers (COL)
Congo Bongo (COL)
Dr Seuss Fix-Up (COL)
Fortune Builders (COL)
Montezuma's Revenge (PB)
Mountain King (SUN)
Pitfall II (ACT)
Zenji (ACT)

OCTOBER

Tournament Tennis (IMGC)

FOURTH QUARTER

Boulder Dash (MF)
Crisis Mountain (MF)
Lunar Leeper (SOL)
Number Bumper (SUN)
Short Circuit (MF)
Stunt Flyer (SOL)
Toy Bizarre (ACT)

DECEMBER

Summer Games (EPYX)

ATARI 5200

THIRD QUARTER

x-Beamrider (ACT)
x-Decathlon (ACT)
x-H.E.R.O. (ACT)
Montezuma's Revenge (PB)
Quest for Quintana Roo (SUN)
Tutankham (PB)
Frogger II: Threedeeep (PB)
Mr Do's Castle (PB)
Pitfall II (ACT)
Zenji (ACT)

OCTOBER

Pastfinder (ACT)
Space Shuttle (ACT)
Zone Ranger (ACT)

DECEMBER

Toy Bizarre (ACT)

ATARI COMPUTERS

THIRD QUARTER

Ankh (DM)
x-Archon II (EA)
B C Grog Revenge (SOL)
Beat the Beatles II (INAC)
Cutthroat (INF)
x-Dallas Quest (DS)
Dr Seuss Fix Up (COL)
x-Flight Simulator II (SUB)
Fortune Builders (COL)
Free Trader (AH)
Gulf Strike (AH)
Habitats (tent int)(AT)
Impossible Mission (EPYX)
Jet Boot Black (DM)
x-Juno First (DS)
Light Waves (CBS)
London Blitz (AH)
Mancopter (DS)
Meridian III (DS)
Mission Algebra (DES)
Mychess II (DM)
x-One on One (EA)
Pitstop II (EPYX)
Polar Pierre (DM)
Quest for Quintana Roo (SUN)
x-Realm of Impossibility (EA)
x-Relax (SYN)
Rock N' Rhythm (SPN)
Short Circuit (MF)
Space Cowboy (AH)
x-Summer Games (EPYX)
Tarzan (COL)
Wargames (COL)

AUGUST

Computer Ambush (SSI)
Computer Baseball (SSI)
x-Decathlon (ACT)
Frogger II Threedeeep (PB)
Grammar Examiner (DES)
x H.E.R.O. (ACT)
x-Imagic 1-2-3 (IMGC)
Mr Do's Castle (PB)

Notable Phantom (DES)
x-Pitfall II (ACT)
Reforger 88 (SSI)
Seti (TRAP)
Super Football (NEXA)
Super Music Box (PPI)
Twisted (TRAP)
Zenji (ACT)

SEPTEMBER

Dunzhin (SCRN)
Kaiv (SCRN)
Master Home Planner (PPI)
Montezuma's Revenge (PB)
Romper Rm I Love My Alphabet (FS)
Spy Vs Spy (FS)
U.S. Adventure (FS)
Wyld (SCRN)
Zone Ranger (ACT)

OCTOBER

Barbie (EPYX)
G I Joe (EPYX)
Hot Wheels (EPYX)
Mr Do (DS)
Pastfinder (ACT)
Space Shuttle (ACT)

DECEMBER

Breakdance (EPYX)
Designer Pencil (ACT)
Toy Bizarre (ACT)

JANUARY

Moreta: Dragonlady of Pern (EPYX)

COMMODORE 64

THIRD QUARTER

x-Archon II (EA)
B C Grog's Revenge (SOL)
x-Beamrider
Cutthroat (INF)
x-Decathlon (ACT)
Dr Seuss Fix-Up (COL)
Fortune Builders (COL)
x-H.E.R.O. (ACT)
x-Impossible Mission (EPYX)
x-Juno First (DS)
Lite Sprite (TS)
Mr Do (DS)
x-Pitfall II (ACT)
x-Relax (SYN)
Rock N' Rhythm (SPN)
Stress Manager (BI)
Stunt Flyer (SOL)
Super Pipeline (INT)
Tarzan (COL)
x-Trivia Arcade (SCRN)
Trivia Mania (PS)
Viking Raider (INT)
Wargames (COL)
Weather Tamers (CBS)
x Word Flyer (EA)
Your Personal Net Worth (SCR)

AUGUST

Ankh (DM)
Baltic 85 (SSI)
x-Blockade Runner (INT)
x-Campaign 84 (SUN)
Circus Charlie (PB)
Frogger II: Threedeeep (PB)
Grammar Examiner (DES)
x-Gust Buster (SUN)
Jet Boot Black (DM)
Mabel's Mansion (DM)
Mr Do's Castle (PB)
Mychess II (DM)
Notable Phantom (DES)
Polar Pierre (DM)
x-Quest for Quintana Roo (SUN)
x-Relax (SYN)
x-Rolloverture (SUN)
Seti (TRAP)
Sierra Championship Boxing (SOL)
Super Music Box (PPI)
x-Toy Bizarre (ACT)
Twisted (TRAP)
Whistler's Bros (BRO)
Zenji (ACT)

SEPTEMBER

Designer Pencil (ACT)
Dragonfire (IMGC)
Dunzhin (SCRN)
Kaiv (SCRN)
Lost Tomb (DS)
Master Home Planner (PPI)
Miner 2049er II (MF)
Montezuma's Revenge (PB)
Moonsweeper (IMGC)
Nova Blast (IMGC)
On Court Football (ACT)
On Court Tennis (ACT)
Park Patrol (ACT)

Robots of Dawn (EPYX)
Romper Rm I Love My Alphabet (FS)
Short Circuit (MF)
Spy Vs Spy (FS)
U.S. Adventure (FS)
Wyld (SCRN)

OCTOBER

Chopper Hunt (IMGC)
Demon Attack (IMGC)
Dracula (IMGC)
Ghostbusters (ACTV)
Injured Engine (IMGC)
Swords & Serpents (IMGC)

DECEMBER

Breakdance (EPYX)
G.I. Joe (EPYX)
Hot Wheels (EPYX)
Pitstop II (EPYX)
Time Machine (IMGC)

APPLE II/IIe

THIRD QUARTER

Ankh (DM)
x-Archon (EA)
Baltic 85 (SSI)
B C Grog's Revenge (SOL)
Boulder Dash (MF)
Breakdance (EPYX)
Cutthroat (INF)
Dunzhin (SCRN)
Earthly Delights (DM)
Grammar Examiner (DES)
Graphics Exhibitor (KOALA)
Juno First (DS)
Kaiv (DM)
Kings Quest (128K)(SOL)
Lost Tomb (DS)
Mabel's Mansion (DM)
Miner 2049er II (MF)
Mission Algebra (DES)
Mychess II (DM)
Notable Phantom (DES)
President's Choice (SPN)
Reforger 88 (SSI)
x-Relax (SYN)
Robot Odyssey I (LC)
Seti (TRAP)
Short Circuit (MF)
Sierra Championship Boxing (SOL)
x-Sky Fox (EA)
Star League Baseball (GAM)
States & Traits (DES)
Station 5 (MF)
x-Summer Games (EPYX)
x-Sky Fox (EA)
Star League Baseball (GAM)
States & Traits (DES)
Station 5 (MF)
x-Summer Games (EPYX)
x-Sky Fox (EA)
Star League Baseball (GAM)
States & Traits (DES)
Station 5 (MF)

SEPTEMBER

Beamrider (ACT)
Cutthroat (INF)
Dragonfire (IMGC)
Injured Engine (IMGC)
Mr Do (DS)
NOVEMBER
Pitfall II (ACT)

DECEMBER

Another Bow (IMGC)
Barbie (EPYX)
Damiano (IMGC)
Designer Pencil (ACT)
G.I. Joe (EPYX)
H.E.R.O. (ACT)
Hot Wheels (EPYX)
Pitstop II (EPYX)
Space Shuttle (ACT)
Stunt Flyer (SOL)

IBM PCjr

THIRD QUARTER

BC Grog's Revenge (SOL)
x-Crime & Punishment (IMGC)
Earthly Delights (DM)
x-Football (IMGC)
In The Chips (CS)
Match Wits (CBS)
Miner 2049er II (MF)
Murder by the Dozen (CBS)
Pipes (CS)
x-Quest for Quintana Roo (SUN)
x-Relax (SYN)
x-Seastalker (INF)

Short Circuit (MF)
Sierra Championship Boxing (SOL)
Summer Games (EPYX)
Trivia Mania (PS)

SEPTEMBER

Archon (EA)
Murder on Zinderneuf (EA)
One on One (EA)
Pitfall II (ACT)
River Raid (ACT)

OCTOBER

Baseball (IMGC)
Decathlon (ACT)
FOURTH QUARTER
Another Bow (IMGC)
Barbie (EPYX)
G.I. Joe (EPYX)
Hot Wheels (EPYX)
Mancopter (DS)
Stress Manager (BI)
Stunt Flyer (SOL)

ADAM

THIRD QUARTER

x-Campaign 84 (SUN)
English I (MF)
x-Expertype (COL)
x-Gust Buster (SUN)
Math I (MF)
x-Mountain King (SUN)
x-Quest for Quintana Roo (SUN)
Recipe Flier (COL)
x-Rolloverture (SUN)
Savings & Loan (VIC)
Sub Roc (COL)
Trek (VIC)
U.S. Constitution (MF)
x-Zaxxon (COL)
x-64K Expander (COL)
FALL
American History (MF)
Health (MF)
High School Algebra (MF)
High School Geometry (MF)
Jr High School Algebra (MF)
Jr High School Geometry (MF)
Physics (MF)

COMPANY NAME CODES:

ACTV - Activision
AH - Avalon Hill
ART - Artwork
AT - Atari
BI - Batteries Included
BRO - Broderbund
CBS - CBS Electronics
COL - Coleco
COMM - Commodore
CS - Creative Software
DES - DesignWare
DM - DataMost
DS - DataSoft
EA - Electronic Arts
ELE - Electra Concepts
EPYX - Epyx
FS - First Star
II - Intellivision Inc
IMGC - Imagic
INAC - Interactive
INF - Infocom
INT - Interphase
LC - Learning Co.
MF - Microfun
MIPC - Microprose
MMG - MMG Micro Software
PB - Parker Bros.
PDI - Program Design Inc
PS - Professional Software
SCR - Scarborough
SCRN - Screenplay
SOL - Sierra
SPN - Spinnaker
SSI - Strategic Simulations
ST - SirTech
STRSIM - Strategic Simulations
SUB - SubLogic
SUN - Sunrise
SYN - Synapse
TRAP - Trapeze
TRO - Tronix
TS - TechSketch
TYM - Tymac
XON - Xonox
VIC - Victory Software

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